ハイスクールDxD
5
冥界合宿のヘルキャット
石踏一榮
ICHIEI ISHIBUMI
ファンタジア文庫

Novel Illustrations

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1-5

ハイスクールD×D5
冥界合宿のヘルキャット

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ファンタジア文庫

9784829134702

ISBN978-4-8291-3470-2
C0193 ¥660E

定価：本体660円（税別）

富士見書房

19201930006605

ハイスクールD×D5
冥界合宿のヘルキャット

夏っ！　兵藤一誠、人生で一度しかない高2の夏休みです！

悪友たちとの約束を取りつけ、やって来ました〈冥界〉に。

部長やアーシア、朱乃さんたちとうれし恥ずかしヴァケーション――のはずだったのに……なんでオレはこんな山の中で、ドラゴンに追いかけられて死にかけてるんだっ!?

脳裏に浮かぶ走馬灯。そういや小猫ちゃんの様子がおかしかったなあ、気になる。なーんて考えていたら、当の小猫ちゃんが倒れちゃったり、ネコ耳だったり。どーなる、オレの夏休み♪

熱血とサバイバル魂と筋肉と煩悩で贈る、学園ラブコメバトルファンタジー疾走！

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石踏一榮
●いしぶみいちえい

1981年生まれ。生粋の千葉県民。ハイスクールD×Dも五巻めとなりました。冬真っ盛りのなか、作中は夏休み突入です。あっつあつな一冊になっておりますのでいろんな意味で興奮できると思います。おっぱいの可能性をさらに広げてみたつもりですが、この本のせいでピンポンダッシュが流行っても私は責任を一切負いません。

イラスト：みやま零
カバーデザイン：元泉志和

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ハイスクールD×D5
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Please become a gentle and strong Sekiryuutei.

Life.0

It was summer. High school student life was also rushing into the summer holidays.

How is everyone spending their time right now? I, presently, am not able to move for some reason.

I was in bed, early in the morning! On either side of me were Buchou and Asia! They were breathing peacefully while sleeping! The three of us were sleeping in the arrangement of the kanji 川 with me in the centre! There was no other situation as wonderful as this! This lewd blessing was more than I deserved, but—right now, there was someone approaching me while squirming inside the light cotton blanket!

I'd felt a sense of discomfort and just woke up a little while ago, but something moving under the blanket was giving me a uniquely elastic and smooth texture! However, it was amazingly soft!?

It came all the way to the vicinity of my chest, and when I looked inside the blanket…

“Ufufu. Good morning, Ise-kun.”

A beautiful girl with long black hair—Akeno-san came out from inside the blankeeeeeeeeet!?

Himejima Akeno-senpai. The vice-president of the Occult Research Club I belong to, and a third year senpai. She was another of my onee-sama-like existences. The other day, it was decided that she would be living together with us because of certain reasons.

Because she was always wearing a ponytail, her unbound black hair felt sexy to me!

Akeno-san was wearing a yukata made of thin fabric. She drew near to my side so that she could softly snuggle against me! In the space between her thighs and breasts, the elastic and soft sensation of a

woman’s entire body assaulted me! Since it was a thin kimono, the sensation of Akeno-san was almost directly transmitted to me! Damn it! Akeno-san’s body has the best softness!

And to top it all off, Akeno-san’s body temperature was making my brain melt!

As she brought her face near my neck, she suddenly stopped moving.

“I’ve arrived.”

While letting her sweet voice leaked out, Akeno-san tightly embraced me!

Uwaaah! An amazing smell was coming from Akeno-san’s hair, and it was stimulating my nostrils to the max!

Chuu.

—! As a surprise attack, I received a kiss on my neck! Wait, a kiiiiiiiiiss!?

Akeno-san clung tightly to me, as my brain felt like it would burst! All of the sensations of Akeno’s body were being transmitted to my bodyyyyyyyyyy!

My legs and Akeno-san’s soft legs were becoming intertwined! Rather, Akeno-san’s legs had entangled! Uhee! Akeno-san’s thighs were wonderfully squishy and smooth!

The fingers of our hands also intertwined themselves together! Amazing, this is like one of those lovers-in-bed scenes that you see in dramas and manga!

Akeno-san made her skinny fingertips crawl over my body. I shivered!

“Ise-kun’s body is quite sturdy, thanks to you being trained by Rias. Ufufu, a man's skin feels better than I imagined. Or is it because it's Ise-kun’s body? Hey, Ise-kun. Does my body feel good?”

She blew into the ear of the immobile me as a finishing blow! She was completely enjoying how I couldn't move against the wonderfulness of a woman's body!

“Y-Yes! Akeno-san’s body is the best!”

“Ufufu, I’m happy. You can enjoy this body even more if you want to, you know? I also want to know more about Ise-kun’s body. — Though I say that, since there is a scary onee-san sleeping next to us, there may be a limit to it. But whether or not we get caught, this critical moment is also fun.”

S! S-version Akeno-san has appeared right from the beginning of the morning! Really, since this person is even more erotic than me, this time even I the ero-devil couldn't stir in surprise!

Akeno-san raised her body just a little and hung over me. Akeno-san looked down on me. Her black hair fell on top of me.

Then, Akeno-san’s face steadily approached mine…Could this be…

“Though it would be nice if time could just stop like this… Something romantic like that would be nice, but as expected—”

The instant my and Akeno-san’s lips were on top on each other, I heard “that” voice.

“Akeno. What are you doing? When did you get into this room?”

—!

…I timidly turned just my eyes to the side. A crimson-haired onee-sama was glaring at me and Akeno-san with extremely displeased half-closed eyes. Buchou, you’re scary! Rias-onee-sama, you’re scary!

Akeno-san turned towards her so that she could show Buchou her hand that was intertwined with mine.

“This is skinship. I thought I would have a nice morning with my adorable Ise-kun, so I came in. After all, being in bed alone is lonely.”

Buchou's eyebrows rose up at that single word used by Akeno-san! Uwaaaaah, she's snapped!

"[My]? Since when did you become Ise's master?"

Buchou spoke as her whole body trembled. Her mouth twitched!

"Even if I'm not his master, I'm his senpai. It's a senpai's duty to be affectionate with their kouhai, right?"

Buchou slowly brought her face close to Akeno-san.

Once her face was closer, Buchou spoke in a voice filled with anger.

"Senpai…I see, so that's your reasoning. This room is close to being a sanctuary for me. My only absolute healing place. Asia aside, I can't have others intrude here! This is my and Ise's room."

When did my room become Buchou's room!? Akeno-san smiled a little at Buchou's words.

"Ara-ara. The ojou-sama has a strong desire to monopolise, doesn't she? Are you perhaps afraid of having it stolen by me?"

"…Looks like I need to discuss this with you once more."

Buchou's body was enveloped in crimson aura! Uwaaaah! Is she preparing for battle!?

"Ara, you're releasing quite an aggressive aura for a discussion, aren't you?"

Smiling, Akeno-san also began to envelop herself in a pale-gold aura! Wha-! Her too!?

"It's a discussion. To the bitter end."

Buchou and Akeno-san glared at each other while releasing crackling sparks all over the place…Uwaaah, so a battle between women was starting right away in the morning then!? Is the cause me who was like a pet to them!?

I felt happy, but more than that, I was scared! If these two usually gentle people glare at each other with demon-like expressions, I'll curl up!

"…Unyuu, is it morning already…? Fuaaaaa…"

And then Asia rose up while rubbing her sleepy eyes!

"Asia, you can go back to sleep…"

I gently stroked Asia's head. Aah, Asia. My healing space!

"Ah, Ise-shan…Then I'll accept your offer and sleep while being hugged by Ise-shan…"

The half-awake Asia tried to go back to sleep while embracing me! Uu, she was extremely adorable, but this wasn't the time for this!

Bofu! Bofu! Bofun!

When I looked in the direction of the sounds, a pillow fight between Buchou and Akeno-san had started nooooow! Onee-samas, what are you two doing so early in the morning!?

"To begin with, I hate how Akeno tries to immediately touch my important thing!"

Buchou threw the pillow with force, and made it hit Akeno-san right in the face! Even after the pillow that hit her fell down, Akeno-san still had a smiling face—that's what I thought, but her eyes were opened widely!?

"Ara, it should be fine if it is just for a bit! You really are stingy, Rias!"

She picked up the fallen pillow and nailed Buchou in the face with it! Uwaa! A direct hit!

Buchou brushed the pillow away from her face! Her eyes were a bit watery!

"This house was just renovated, so I won't let you do as you please,

Akeno!”

Finally, she threw away all of her appearance and words which had brimmed with elegance, and threw the pillow again with the voice and face of a girl her age! Akeno-san dodged the pillow and then threw my own pillow at Buchou!

“Sirzechs-sama said that we should live together and get along with each other!”

“This is my and Ise’s house! Both you and onii-sama are in the way of Ise and me! I can’t stand it anymore!”

Those words make me extremely happy, Buchou! Tears full of emotion came out! I’m more blessed than I deserve as her servant! But those words just now are all just the selfishness of an ojou-sama, aren’t they?

“You intend to ignore Sirzechs-sama’s wishes!? So you value Ise-kun more than Maou-sama then! —Lend me Ise-kun for a bit as well!”

“No! Absolutely not!”

The two onee-samas were having a quarrel appropriate for girls their age.

H-Hmmm. Since we started living together, I had gotten to see Buchou’s and Akeno-san’s true faces, but…The two great onee-samas who gave off a noble atmosphere. Everyone admired them. I admired them as well.

However, in reality, they were ordinary girls who also showed faces appropriate for their age. I wasn’t particularly shocked about that. Rather, I was happy. The “noble” them were good, but them acting as girls was also cute. Rather, I think I like them like this even more.

Hmm? Then, I felt doubts about some of the details of their quarrel since a while ago.

…The house was just renovated…?

Now that I think about it, the bed looked excessively big…Since there was plenty of space left on the bed even though Buchou and Akeno-san were having a pillow fight.

Arerere!? Was my bed always this big!? So big that there was still enough space even with four people on it!? Rather, there was even a canopy as well!

When I looked around the room carefully…I realised that it was more spacious than before! Huh!? It was this spacious!? Even though my room was only 8 tatami-mats[1] wide! Isn't it twice as big now!?

The television had also changed from a small cathode-ray tube type to a huge new-model flat screen TV!

Aaaaah! There were even all the latest kinds of game consoles! Things that I couldn't buy with just my allowance and part-time earnings were in my room!

I quickly left my room! Strange! It was just my normal house until last night!

The corridor was twice as spacious as before! There were also staircases leading both up and down!? My house, as a two-story building, was only supposed to have two floors here! There is a third floor now!?

When I took a peek at the staircase, somehow, it looked like the levels didn't stop at a third floor!

When I ran down the stairs, an amazingly spacious entry hall appeared before me!

I let out a wheezing breath, and when I looked at my entire house from the outside—.

How can this be!? My house was!? By the work of a carpenteeeeeer!?

"W-What the hell is thiiiiiiiiiiiis!?"

My scream echoed throughout the neighbourhood.

Naturally. My house—in addition to having more than twice the plot area, had become a six-story building.

Life.1 It's summer break, let's Go to the Underworld!

Part 1

“No, it was renovated. I was also shocked when I got up this morning. The house was renovated while we were sleeping.”

Breakfast set. At the table that had become five times wider than before, my father said that while wearing a smile all over his face. Gathered around the table were all the members of my new family, including myself, my parents, Buchou, Asia, Akeno-san and Xenovia.

I had questioned my father after we began eating. The short question, “What’s going on?”

My mother brought in the breakfast miso soup from the kitchen which had also become five times wider.

“Apparently Rias’s father does work related to construction as well and he said that he’d renovate this place free of charge as part of a model house.”

There’s no way that kind of story could be true! No, I could understand it if Buchou’s parents did it.

It was because she knew all this that Buchou was eating her meal calmly and silently.

Rather, let alone renovating, didn’t our lot area also expand? Haven't the neighbouring houses completely disappeared and been turned into the grounds of our new house…?

“Now that you mention it, it seems that Suzuki-san and Tamura-san next door have moved away. I hear that they suddenly obtained some favourable plots of land and then moved there.”

So said my father.

—! Buchou’s family was definitely involved with that! There was no mistake!

“It’s all right. It was a peaceful settlement. So that everyone could be happy.”

Next to me, Buchou smiled widely while whispering.

So this is the negotiation technique of Devils!? Since Buchou said so, the neighbours had surely ended up happy as well, but… How dreadful they are, the Gremory family!

My mother held out the house blueprints. It looked to be the room assignment chart.

“On the first floor are the guest rooms, living room, kitchen, and Japanese-style rooms. On the second floor are the rooms of Ise, Rias-san and Asia-chan. The arrangement has the other two adjacent to Ise’s room. It seems to be structured so that you can go between the rooms next to each other from inside.”

I see, so the second floor was entirely for Buchou’s selfishness. Uwah, my room seems to be more than four times bigger than before…Was the installation of furniture also from the Gremory’s possessions? Amazing…There was a huge television I’d never seen before in the living room. There was also a chandelier on the ceiling…

“On the third floor are your father’s and my room, the study, and the storeroom. On the fourth floor are Akeno-san’s and Xenovia’s rooms. There’s also the room for Koneko-chan, who will be coming later.”

When my eyes met with Akeno-san’s, she gave me a full-blown smile. For some reason, that smiling face looked more genuine than the smiles she usually wore…Recently, Akeno-san has had a wonderfully nice smiling face when with me.

It was different than her smiling face from before. It was difficult to explain, but could I call it her true smiling face? Akeno-san would show that face to me now. I felt closer to Akeno-san now, with her having a much gentler atmosphere compared to before.

I felt like she wasn’t an existence outside of reach anymore—.

Though, for me, she was still someone far beyond my grasp…

As my heart was pounding, Buchou lightly pulled my cheek. Auu, Buchou has steadily become more severe too…I have no intention of having any master besides Buchou, though. She worries too much.

My mother continued her explanation of the room assignments.

“The fifth and sixth floors are entirely made of just vacant rooms. For the time being we intend to use them as guest rooms. Since Rias-san said she didn’t mind letting anyone have the rooms except for the second floor when we asked her.”

“Yes. This is the house of Ise’s mother and father. In the end, I and the others are just home-staying here.”

Buchou responded with words overflowing with grace.

Arere!? Buchou, didn’t you say “This is my and Ise’s house” earlier in my room!? What an about face!

“There is also an open-air garden on the roof. I will plant vegetables～”

My father said that as his eyes lit up! Aah, he has no doubts about it at all! There’s no mistake that his mind was numbed by the renovation of his dreams!

“Because we built it so sturdily, it won’t collapse even in the case of a war.”

“Hahahaha, you’re quite skilled at joking, Rias-san.”

This was the conversation between Buchou and my father…What Buchou says really is true. This house’s structure was seriously transformed so that it could withstand even a war. There couldn’t be things like cannons concealed somewhere, could there?

However, what did my father and Buchou’s father discuss during the parent visit the other day? I’m really worried about it. They couldn't have agreed on a discussion of selling me completely to the

underworld or something, could they!?

There was no way that could be, but even so I felt that the eyes that my parents looked at me with had changed just a little since the day of that parent's visit.

"There're also underground floors apparently."

Xenovia said that while she was having a hard time with her chopsticks.

"Underground floors!?"

"Yeah, there are up to three underground floors."

I was the one who cried out wildly. Buchou nodded and confirmed it. This house even has underground floors!?

"The first underground floor is a huge spacious room. Not only can it be used as a training room, it can also be used as a movie theatre. It's also equipped with a large indoor bath. The second underground floor is used entirely for an indoor pool. It can also use warm water. In the third underground floor are a library and a storehouse."

Buchou explained this while taking out additional blueprints.

…So my house even has an indoor pool…I don't know what's what anymore…

"Since there's also an elevator, you can smoothly get on and off from the sixth ground floor to the third underground floor."

This house also has an elevator…It's like a real building. I didn't have any words left to say anymore.

In this way, my house was transformed into a palatial residence a few days after summer holidays began.

“You’re returning to the Underworld!?”

Breakfast had ended, and Buchou nodded at me as I sat in my room. All the members of the occult research club were gathered in my room.

All the members who were living together had rough appearances.

Kiba, Koneko-chan and Gasper had arrived at my house just a little while ago as well.

The first two were wearing casual clothes. Koneko-chan in a one-piece dress looked cute.

Even with this many people here, there was plenty of extra space in my room. Everyone sat on expensive-looking sofas.

Only Gasper got into a cardboard box he brought along, but…He was dressed in girl clothes! That’s also as usual! Yeah! The cross-dressing boy!

“I’m returning home now that the summer holidays have started. I do this every year. —Wait, what’s wrong, Ise? Your eyes are teary?”

I shed tears at Buchou’s words!

“Uu, because Buchou suddenly started talking about returning to the underworld, I thought of you leaving me behind and going back…”

I don’t want that! I don’t want Buchou to leave me behind and go back! When I think of Buchou’s breasts going somewhere far away, I feel sad, and I won’t be able to spend my summer holidays peacefully! I can’t imagine life without Buchou anymore!

“Geez, is that all? You and I will be together for hundreds, for thousands of years from now on, so put your mind at ease. I won’t do something like leaving you behind.”

Buchou then gave a wry smile while rubbing my cheek.

I see, we are Devils. We live longer than humans. So Buchou and I,

as well as the other club members, will be together for a long time. When I think of that, I don't feel lonely at all.

Surely, I'll live much longer than Matsuda, Motohama, or my parents. When I think of it like that, it seems lonely…That separation that must eventually come.

Buchou gracefully drank tea as she said that. —Wait, we're also going to the Underworld!?

"Eh!? We're going to the Underworld too!?"

"That's right. Since you're all servant devils in my family, it's only natural for you to accompany your master. You're coming to my home together with me. Now that I think of it, this is also the first time for Asia and Xenovia, right?"

Asia nodded at Buchou's question.

"Y-Yes! I'm nervous about going to hell while alive! I-I thought I'd like to go there with the intention of dying!"

Asia! I don't understand what you mean at all!

"Yes. I've been interested in the underworld—in hell for a long time. However, for the sake of going to heaven, I had to serve the Lord…But now that I'm a Devil, there shouldn't be any possibility of me going to heaven…I feel irony in setting foot in the same world as those who have been sent to hell as divine punishment. Hell, huh. It suits a former believer who became a Devil."

Ah, you're once again becoming depressed over futile worries, Xenovia…

"We will spend the remainder of the summer holidays there until after the 20th of August. It seems like we'll be returning here at the end of the month. The plan is to train and attend various kinds of events at the underworld."

Buchou thus told us the schedule. I see, so our group is going to spend time in the underworld until the end of summer. I went to the Underworld for a little bit during the battle with the Phoenix

family…I don't know anything about it besides the fact that the sky there is purple.

Also, it seems to be the place where the souls of the dead arrive at as well, and the field of business management also seems to be popular there.

But, if I spend the summer holidays there, won't the schedule that I made fail?

"Ah, but, there are things I want to do this summer."

I let out a sigh as I spoke.

The three of us, me, Matsuda and Motohama, all powerfully promised each other, "This year, let's get girlfriends and have ero-ero experiences during the summer!"

We would go to the sea and to the pool this summer, where we would pick up girls! Or that was what we decided. I didn't have a girlfriend…I had one before, but I was killed by my former girlfriend…

I'll enjoy myself this summer! Or so I had thought.

"Ara, Ise. Did you also have plans to go somewhere?"

Buchou asked me that dubiously.

"Yes. I was going to go to the sea and the pool."

"There aren't any seas in the underworld, but there are huge lakes. There are also pools in this house and at my parents' home as well, you know? There's also hot springs there, but is that no good?"

If I thought about it, wouldn't I get tens and hundreds of times more enjoyment at the underworld lakes and pools with Buchou and the others than going with Matsuda and Motohama to the sea!? Moreover, there's hot springs over there!

Inside my brain, I fantasised about the stark naked forms of Buchou, Akeno-san, Asia, Xenovia and Koneko-chan going inside the steam!

A b-b-b-breasts steam festival!?

Applying oil and peeping into the hot springs…Or will it be mixed baths!?

I want to rub Buchou's and Akeno-san's breasts! And massage them! Fully, with my hands!

"…Disgusting delusions are prohibited."

I was verbally jabbed at by Koneko-chan with half-opened eyes! As expected of Koneko-sama! She really can see into my mind!

After she jabbed at me, Koneko-chan let out a deep sigh, and for some reason looked off with distant eyes.

Huh? Now that I think about it, her tsukkomi's sharpness seemed slightly weaker than usual.[2]

"Ise-kun, you have a face that is hornier than I could imagine."

"You seem to have an abundant imagination and seem to be enjoying yourself, senpai…I envy you…"

Kiba spoke refreshingly, and Gasper murmured in what seemed to be envy from the depths of his heart.

"Why don't you guys go on dates with girls this summer?"

Those two have better faces than me. If you had those intentions, couldn't you enjoy the best summer!?

"It's because I have training."

You damn Mr. Diligent! Kiba deserves to be punished for not putting his good looks to good use!

"I'm fine…I'm a hikikomori, so I'm fine if I stay indoors and put on cute clothes while surfing the net at my house…"

You damn hikikomori cross-dresser! Gasper is useless! From head to toe, he's a useless child just waiting for a tsukkomi!

“Then, Ise. Go on a date with me in the Underworld. There should be time for just a date…”

As a servant, I cried at Buchou’s proposal! Buchou really does spoil me!

“Buchooooooou! I’ll come! I’ll come with all my strength!”

“Ara-ara. In that case, I’ll spend time with Ise in the bedroom. While doing ecchi things that Buchou can’t seem to do.”

Akeno-san spoke while lewdly tracing around her chest with her finger!

Buh! Blood spurted from my nose at Akeno-san’s stimulating words! …That’s erotic! That’s sexy, Akeno-onee-sama! Just what kinds of things will you do to me in the bedroom!?

“I forbid it.”

“I refuse.”

Buchou and Akeno-san locked eyes on each other as sparks flew! Aaaaah! They’ve resumed the fight from earlier this morning! Why do these two quarrel over their affection for their kouhai!?

“I’m also going to the Underworld.”

[!?]

Before we became aware of it, a good-looking black-haired man was sitting on a seat in the corner. —It was Azazel-sensei.

All the club members were taken aback by sensei’s sudden appearance.

As the Governor of the Fallen Angel organisation that opposed the Devils, he had been present at the peace conference the other day between Devils, Angels and Fallen Angels. For some reason, only this person stayed at Kuou Academy and started as a teacher there. What’s more, he’s now the advisor of our occult research club. It was an unimaginable situation just from the face of it.

Seriously, where did this person come in from? I didn't sense his presence at all. Or rather, I was ignorant when it came to that field. Even so, not even Buchou or Kiba had noticed him.

Well, since he was the Fallen Angel Governor, he would be a last boss-like existence depending on the situation. It's amazing that we have such a person as an ally.

"W-Where did you come in from?"

Buchou asked that to sensei while blinking in surprise.

"Hmm? Isn't it normally from the front door?"

Sensei answered calmly.

"…I didn't even feel your presence."

Kiba voiced his feelings honestly. As I thought, even Kiba who had attained Balance Breaker couldn't sense him…

"That's just due to your lack of training. I just came in normally. More importantly, you're returning to the underworld, right? Then, I'll go too. I'm your [teacher], after all."

Yes, he had taken up the role of our [teacher]. Since he has an abundance of knowledge on Sacred Gears, it seems he'll be teaching us our battle styles from now on.

He had only taught us a little so far, but it seemed like the Sacred Gear owners in this group, including me, had managed to grasp something thanks to him. More than just using power or leading, this person was certainly good at teaching most of all.

He's amazingly skilled at explaining. I think he's definitely suited to be a teacher or lecturer.

Sensei took out a notepad from his pocket and read out loud as he opened it.

"The schedule for the Underworld is…first, a visit to Rias's parents, and the introduction of the servant Devils to the current head of the

family. After that, there's the annual meeting of new young Devils. And then there's your training over there. I'm mainly going along with you for your training. While you're all at the Gremory house, I'll be meeting with Sirzechs. Geez, so troublesome."

Sensei sighed. He seriously finds it bothersome to do. I think this Governor of an organisation is so bad with that because this person receives a lot of support from his subordinates.

Once in a while, Fallen Angels whose names I didn't know would come to meet with sensei. They would say things like "Please decide on a secretary!", "Look after your personal appearance while in the human world!", or "You absolutely need to have personal bodyguards!" when they visited. They all seemed tremendously worried about Azazel-sensei being in this town. I heard there were some top officials among the Fallen Angels who visited as well.

He would always send all those members back with the words, "It's fine, so go back. That's an order." I think that we're lucky to have that kind of Fallen Angel teaching us how to get stronger.

Alright, I'll get even a little closer to my rival Hakuryuukou Vali, using this opportunity!

Since it seems like I'll just be decisively defeated by him as I am now…I absolutely don't want to die before I do ecchi things with Buchou and Akeno-san!

"Then, Azazel—Sensei, you'll be accompanying us, right? Shall we make the travel reservations for you?"

Sensei nodded at Buchou's question.

"Yes, please do. It's my first time entering the Underworld through the Devils' route. I'm looking forward to it. Since, I usually use the route of the Fallen Angels' side."

The Underworld, huh. How will we go there? As expected, will it be by magic circle? The Underworld is divided between the world of the Devils and the world of the Fallen Angels. It seems the fence between the two has disappeared with the establishment of peace,

and cultural interaction has started, though…

The ignorant me couldn't imagine that place at all.

For the time being, I sent a mail to Matsuda and Motohama.

[I'm passing on going to the beach this summer! Because, I'm going to the hot springs with Buchou and the others!]

They quickly responded back.

[Die!]

[Go to hell!]

Yeah, I am going to hell—to the Underworld. You're surprisingly on the mark, my close friends.

Part 2

The day we set off. The first place we headed to was—the nearest station. Everyone was wearing Kuou Academy's summer uniform. Buchou said that, if we were entering the Underworld, this was our best uniform.

This was the station where people usually took the train…Why were we going to the underworld from here? I was full of questions, but Buchou and Akeno-san determinedly headed towards the elevator installed within the station.

I remembered that it was a small elevator that could only hold five people at most.

Buchou and Akeno-san entered it first, and then spoke.

"Then, please come in first, Ise, Asia and Xenovia. We'll be going down from here."

"G-Going down?"

I was puzzled by Buchou's words. After all, this station could only go up.

"Come on, stop blinking in surprise like that and come in."

Buchou beckoned us while smiling wryly. While those of us in the new devils group exchanged glances with each other, we complied with Buchou's words.

"Yuuto and the rest of you who are used to it, please come together with Azazel afterwards."

"Yes, Buchou."

Kiba answered to Buchou, and then the elevator doors closed.

Since we had some big luggage with us, the inside was quite small as a result.

As I thought, the floor display only had floors “1” and “2”, but… Buchou took out what seemed to be a card from her skirt pocket and turned it towards an electronic panel.

Pi.

Some kind of electronic sound…It had reacted to the card, and then.

Gakun.

I was seized by a sensation of going down! Eh!? There was a bottom!? Asia and I couldn’t hide our surprise! Xenovia just tilted her head as a small reaction. Buchou and Akeno-san saw the shocked state of Asia and I, and giggled a little at us.

“Beneath this station, there is a secret level.”

“Buchou, even though I grew up in this town, this is the first time I’m hearing of such a thing!”

“That’s only natural. It’s a route that is exclusively for devils. Ordinary humans can’t arrive here even if they struggle their whole lives. Areas for the exclusive-use of devils are hidden within the town in this way, you know?”

There seems to be many places I don’t know about in my town. Just how far has the devils’ business world penetrated into this town?

We kept descending for another minute. At last, the elevator stopped.

After the doors opened, Buchou urged us forward with a “Go ahead”, and what confronted my sight as I went out first was—a vast artificial space! It was some kind of huge cave!

Rather, it seemed to have the structure of a station platform. Though there were a few differences from the design and structure of those in the human world…Wait, there were train tracks! As I thought, is this a station?

After we waited a little, we were also joined by Kiba and the others

from the elevator.

“Now that all of us are here, we’ll walk to platform three.”

With Buchou and Akeno-san in the lead, we began to walk.

Hah. But what a vast space. I felt that this place was several times the size of the station we usually used. The ceiling above was also distant. It seemed like your voice would echo if you yelled out “Hey!”

There was no one else here besides us. The wall lamps that illuminated this place gave off a magic-like mysterious glow.

Before I realised it, Akeno-san came to my side—and suddenly grasped my hand! Does she intend to walk while holding hands? I was shocked, but for some reason I grasped her hand back like I always did with Asia.

“__”

Though that was all I did, Akeno-san’s face turned red and seemed happy! Eh!? Is this okay!? Aaaaah, but, when she has such a girlish reaction, even I don’t know what I might do! Even though she is usually very erotic, she sometimes acts like a young girl. That difference provokes my male instincts!

“……”

“…*sob*”

Uu, Buchou and Asia’s gazes were sharp…Asia even had teary eyes. Sorry, Asia.

After taking passages left and right, we came out into an open space again.

Oh! Oooooh! There was what seemed to be a train in front of us! I say “seemed to” because its form was more peculiar than the trains I knew.

There were many devil-representing patterns carved into it at acute

angles…Ah, it's the Gremory pattern! And there was also Sirzechs-sama's pattern! Could this be—.

"It's a train owned by the Gremory family."

Buchou answered without hesitation! Amazing, so the Gremory family also owns trains…

Bushu.

While I was surprised, the train doors opened automatically. With Buchou in the lead, we entered the train.

I had once again reconfirmed my master's huge scale, but that was just the prologue.

Riiiiiiiiiiiing.

The departure whistle sounded, and the train began to move.

We had gone to sit down in the centre of the train. Buchou was in the first train car ahead of us, and it appeared that the rest of our group had to sit in the central train car behind it. I thought that there were surprisingly minor customisations.

Asia and I sat together on the seats facing away from the train's motion, and Akeno-san and Xenovia took the seats facing us.

Koneko-chan, Gasper and Kiba took the seats next to us. And there was Azazel-sensei sitting at the end of the car, but—he had already entered sleep mode.

The train started running for several minutes. The train advanced down the dark tunnel. I'd been told that this train was powered by a unique fuel that existed in the Underworld. There were a lot of things I didn't know about the world, weren't there?

"How long till we get there?"

I asked Akeno-san that.

“We’ll arrive in about an hour. Since it seems that this train passes through the dimensional barrier using official means before it eventually arrives at the Underworld.”

“I thought that we could just jump with a magic circle and enter the Underworld like that.”

“Usually that’s fine, but if Ise-kun and the other new household devils don’t enter at least once by the official route, you’ll be punished for illegally entering. That’s why Ise-kun and the others have to properly finish the official entry procedure.”

“Eh!? Seriously!? But I’ve jumped using the magic circle and entered Buchou’s engagement party before!?"

Yes, I had entered Buchou’s engagement party in the Underworld with a transfer magic circle given to me by Grayfia-san.

Was I going to be punished!? There wouldn’t be any police who were going to cuff me as soon as I arrived at the Underworld, right!?

Akeno-san gave a small smile despite my worries.

“It seems that was a special case because you were transported with Sirzechs-sama’s back-door magic circle, you know? Of course, doing it twice is impossible.”

“I-Is that so…So my instant ticket to jail for going there has been pardoned…”

I was a little relieved. It’s because I’m ignorant of the rules of devils even though I’m a devil myself. Not only was I unskilled, my devil knowledge was even more limited than Asia and Xenovia. I had survived up to now like this.

“Since it was a special case, the matter of the back-door magic circle is fine. However, you may be punished for sexual contact with your master.”

Akeno-san touched her cheek with her hand and said this while giggling.

“What!?”

Hey, hey, hey! It’s quite serious if that’s true! I had touched Buchou’s body a fair amount, you know!?

I had rubbed her breasts several times, and had stroked her thighs several times as well! At the school pool before summer vacation, I’d also applied oil all over her bare body, you know!?

Ah, this is bad. I was being stimulated from remembering that sensation. Buchou’s body had been so soft and smooth. And yet, it had been elastic too, so it was amazing when I touched her skin…

Fuwa. While I was repeating that delusion, someone had gotten on my lap—wait, Akeno-san!? She was bringing her face close and was looking at me with an erotic gaze!

Akeno-san took my hand, and…

“There’s no problem with skinship between servants. Like this—”

She guided my hand to her thiiiiighs! Nuha! Akeno-san’s leg had the best softness and affected my brain! A nosebleed spurted out!

And then my hand was—led to under her skirt! T-That’s… forbidden territory…I gulped. Because! Because, if I keep going like this, my hand will reach into her skirt…it will reach Akeno-san’s panties! Was she fine with that!? Was Akeno-san okay with me going all the way to her panties!?

The instant my hand went beneath Akeno-san’s skirt—.

Asia’s hand appeared from the side and grabbed my hand with a tug.

Asia appealed with teary eyes as her mouth pouted in the shape of the “he” character.[3]

“Akeno-san’s influence is too strong, Ise-san will become a

pervert…”

“Ara-ara. Asia-chan, isn’t it healthy for young men to be a bit perverted?”

Arere? Based on the conversation just now, had it been decided that I was a pervert? But, if I can touch Akeno-san’s body, I don’t mind being a pervert!

Ara? Koneko-chan would usually make a sharp retort at this timing, but…when I looked over at her, I saw Koneko-chan's form looking out the window. She was completely ignoring us even though we were making so much noise! She doesn't seem to be the usual Koneko-chan…Next to her, Gasper also seemed to have trouble speaking out.

And then—.

"Look who's talking, Asia. Generally, skinship between master and servant is quite natural."

—. This voice is…When I turned my gaze, my master was there, a red aura enveloping her entire body! She was angry! And extremely pretty! Why was she here!? Didn't she have to be in the first train car ahead!?

B-Buchou! This is bad! Akeno-san was on my lap while having a lewd look on her face! My hand was on the verge of venturing inside her skirt!

I tried to free my hand, but Akeno-san brought my hand to her mouth.

Nuchu.

My middle finger made a watery sound, and went inside Akeno-san's mouth! Uhaa! The sensation of the inside of a girl's mouth made my brain melt! It was warm and slippery, and furthermore, my finger was wrapped around by her tongue! Moreover, she sucked it! It seemed like various things were being sucked up!

When Akeno-san pulled my finger out from her mouth, a trail of saliva could be erotically seen connecting to my finger!

"Stealing from the master gets me fired up."

Akeno-san smiled at Buchou with a defiant gaze! S-Scary! Erotic, but scary!

"A-Akeno, that's en—"

“Princess Rias. Communication with your servants is fine, but isn’t an example of procedure also good?”

Buchou’s angry voice was interrupted, and a third person had unexpectedly appeared. It was an elderly man. He had the appearance of a train conductor. Was he the conductor? His white beard was dandy.

“I-I’m sorry…”

“Ho-ho-ho. For the little princess to be concerned with the topic of men and women. I’ve lived a long life.”

Buchou’s face turned a deep red at the man’s happy laugh.

Taking off his hat again, he bowed his head to us.

“Nice to meet you, all of the princess’ new servant devils. I am Reynaldo, the conductor of the Gremory private train. Pleased to make your acquaintance.”

We also stood up and bowed at his polite greeting.

“N-Nice to meet you as well! I am Buchou Rias Gremory-sama’s [Pawn], Hyoudou Issei! Please treat me well!”

“I’m Asia Argento! Her [Bishop]! Please treat me well!”

“I’m Xenovia. [Knight]. Please treat me well from now on.”

All us new devils greeted him.

Akeno-san had also returned to her seat before I was aware of it. She seemed a bit disappointed at having to part. Akeno-san’s ero-attack was dreadful! Even I couldn’t move! Could my chastity be stolen before I know it!? She’s amazing, our [Queen]! Though her occasional girlish behaviour was even more intense!

With the greetings finished, the conductor—Reynaldo-san took out a unique machine for some reason, and captured us on what seemed to be a monitor.

“U-Umm…?”

Me, Asia and Xenovia were troubled by this reaction. Buchou and Akeno-san seemed to know what it was.

“This is a machine from the Devil world that checks and compares you. The fact that this train is formally entering the Underworld is important and therefore all modes of transport require inspection. It would be a serious matter in the case that there is some fabrication. In the current time, it would be quite serious if someone occupied the train.”

I see. So he was confirming whether we were the real thing with that machine.

Buchou told us while smiling.

“Your records give your piece designations, and when transmitted it is registered as data in the Underworld. That’s why they check it with this machine. There’s no problem. Since everyone here is who they say they are.”

Though she said that, it let out a “BI-BI!” alarm over me, which didn’t mean “ IMPOSTOR!”, right? I was slightly afraid, but then it let out a light “PIKON” sound, and our checking was passed.

“Princess, with this both the checking and the formalities for the entry of the new faces here are finished. Now you can all rest and relax until we arrive at the scheduled station. There are also beds to sleep in and places where you can have a meal, so please use them until we reach our destination.”

Reynaldo-san smiled pleasantly. Ooh, so our entry is finished with that! That machine really is convenient.

“Thank you, Reynaldo. Is Azazel next?”

Buchou turned to look at sensei, but he was sleeping soundly.

“…What nerve that guy has, sleeping in the train of a race that were his enemies till just the other day.”

Buchou had a face of amazement, but she was smiling a little.

“Ho-ho-ho. The Governor of the Fallen Angels really is peaceful.”

Reynaldo-sama also laughed pleasantly.

Really, whether you call him courageous or just audacious, Azazel-sensei was a Fallen Angel Governor that got agitated by nothing.

The check was finished while sensei kept sleeping, and the safe entry process of all club members was completed.

Part 3

About forty minutes after our departure, we heard an announcement while we were killing time by playing cards.

[We will momentarily be breaking through the dimensional wall. We will momentarily be breaking through the dimensional wall.]

“Try looking outside.”

Buchou said this to me, Asia and Xenovia. Originally, Buchou seemed to have had to sit in the front train car as a high-class devil, but she seemed to have been lonely by herself and had passed the time in our car instead.

Following Buchou’s words, I pushed my face against the window along with Asia. And then—.

The scenery changed from the darkness of before, and a landscape appeared! Ooh! A purple sky! And also—.

“Mountains! And trees too! Hahahaha! Amazing! Amaziiiiiiiing!”

I unintentionally babbled excitedly in a loud voice. But next to me, Asia was also feeling excited with her cries of “Amazing, amazing!”! Because! We’re having fun, naturally!

Because there was the landscape of a world we didn’t know there!

“It’s fine if you open the window now.”

Buchou had given permission, so I opened the window. Wind came in! I had also breathed in the air of the Underworld last time, but it was somehow different from that of the human world! Rather than a slimy kind of feeling, I felt something peculiar! However, the temperature outside was just right, I felt. Neither hot, nor cold.

When I took my face away from the window and looked back, it seemed that the train had come out of what appeared to be a black hole.

That's the dimensional wall? The dimensional tunnel? At any rate, that seems to be a hole that connects to the human world. We came out from there. And now we've entered the Underworld!

I could see the landscape of the Underworld from my seat. There were mountains and rivers as well. Trees also grew in abundance, and there were even forests. Ah! A town! There are houses too! They had a peculiar shape, but devils lived in them, right?

Amazing! Thinking about it, I hadn't gone abroad before. This might be my first time coming in contact with a foreign culture and country.

It's hard to believe that my first cultural exchange is in another world. My life really is strange.

"This area is already within Gremory territory."

Buchou spoke proudly.

"Then, is everything including these train tracks we've been running on until now on the land of Buchou's family!?"

Buchou nodded at my shocked question. Seriously!? What a shocking thing! So the mountains, rivers the town we passed before are part of her family's territory? Then, were the people living in that town the vassals of this fiefdom?

I once more looked at Buchou with a look of respect and envy.

Amazing! My master was really rich! The scale was so different!

"How large is the Gremory's territory?"

That was my question. To be honest, I was very interested in how big it was. About the size of the district of Tokyo?

Kiba suddenly showed his face over my seat and answered my question.

"If I remember correctly, it's about the size of Honshu in Japan."[4]

……Eh? I couldn't believe my ears for a moment at that unexpected answer. But, I soon understood.

"H-Honshuuuuuuu!?"

I shouted out in a loud voice! Both Buchou and Kiba nodded.

"The Underworld has the same amount of surface area as the human world, but the population here isn't the same as the human world. Even with Devils, Fallen Angels, and other races, it isn't that high. And since there are no oceans, the land is also spacious."

Buchou explained that.

Seriously!? Wait, just how many times have I used the words "seriously" and "amazing" today!? When hearing such information, it's only natural to be shocked!

I-In other words, if it was in my world, the Gremory's territory would engulf almost all of Japan…I-It must be because Buchou is a "princess"! She really is that super-rich!? The scale is also amazing!

"Even if you say it's the size of Honshu, isn't it mostly unused space? It's mostly just forest and mountains."

B-Buchou, even if you say that, it already exceeds my imagination and I don't know how to react anymore…

Next to me, Asia was also in a state of "?????". As for Xenovia, she had stopped considering her surroundings and had started talking about the swords of the Underworld with Kiba.

Buchou clapped her hands together as she remembered something.

"That's right. Ise, Asia, Xenovia. Since part of my territory will be given to you all later, please tell me what places you want."

"W-We can have our own territory!?"

"You're all the servant devils of the next family head. Living in my territory as part of the Gremory group is permitted. Akeno, Yuuto, Koneko, and even Gasper possess land within my territory."

With a “PON!” sound, Buchou made a map appear in the air with magic and then expanded it and showed it to us.

It’s geography that I don’t know, but it seems to be a map of Gremory territory.

Buchou spoke with a pleasant smile.

“The red areas are places that have already been taken, so they’re no good, but anywhere else is okay. Now then, please point at the land you like. I’ll give it to you.”

Father, mother, I’m having an amazing time in this strange new land…

Part 4

For some ten-odd minutes after that, the train continued through this world that was unknown to me.

In the end, an area that was abundant with nature such as mountains and lakes was my personal territory. Well, since management of my land was still some time away in the future, I finished with just choosing it for now.

It was then that another announcement came out.

[We will soon be arriving at the Gremory main residence. We will soon be arriving at the Gremory main residence. Everyone, thank you for riding this train.]

Ooh, it's the last stop!

I stuck my body out from the window and turned my gazed ahead of us. Then…for some reason, there was a huge crowd of people there! What's with that!? When I strained my eyes, I saw that they were soldiers dressed in soldier clothing. Could these people be the Gremory family's troops!?

"Ise, we're almost there. Close the window."

"Y-Yes, Buchou."

As suggested by Buchou, we began to prepare to disembark. The train's speed gradually slowed down and eventually stopped.

Gakun.

After it had quietly stopped, we exited from the open door with Buchou in the lead.

However, only Azazel-sensei didn't look like he was getting off.

"A-re, you're not getting off, sensei?"

“Yeah, I plan to keep going through Gremory territory like this and go to the Maou’s territory. I have a meeting with Sirzechs and the others there. A so-called “invitation”. Since it faces the main residence of the Gremory's, I’ll come after I go see them and finish my greetings.”

Azazel-sensei waved his hand and explained this. I see, since sensei is the leader of an organisation, his schedule was busy by coming here.

“Then, see you later, sensei.”

“Say hi to my brother for me, Azazel.”

Sensei waved his hand in response to my and Buchou’s words.

The instant that I once again came down to the station’s home with the other club members minus sensei—.

[Welcome home, Rias-ojou-sama!]

Such bellowing voices! Ooh! I was surprised! Soon after that—.

Panpanpanpan!

Fireworks were set off, soldiers aimed their guns at the sky and fired, and people that looked as if they were from an orchestra band began to play simultaneously! A soldier who rode on top of a mysterious creature flew in the sky above, and waved a flag.

Asia and I didn’t know what to do in the face of this entirely unexpected event and just huddled together as if we were out of place. Kiba and the others seemed to be accustomed to this, but for the new Asia and I, it was an incredible phenomenon! Xenovia just kept blinking her eyes!

“Hiiiiii…So many people…”

Gasper was terrified by the large number of people here and hid behind my back.

Looking carefully, there were a lot of butlers and maids among

them too. When Buchou approached them, they simultaneously bowed their heads and then,

[Welcome back, Rias-ojou-sama.]

They welcomed her.

“Thank you, everyone. I’m home. I’ve returned.”

Buchou also responded with a smile covering her whole face. Seeing that, the butlers and maids also smiled back.

And then a lady with a face I recognised appeared.

—It was the silver-haired maid, Grayfia-san!

“Welcome back, ojou-sama. You arrived early. Above all, it’s good that you were safe while traveling. Now then, all family members, please board the carriage. We’ll be going to the main residence with this.”

We were led by Grayfia to a gorgeous-looking carriage! The horse also didn’t seem to be a normal horse, as they had a glint in their eyes in its big frame that was sharper than the ones I knew. Was this an Underworld horse?

Our baggage was still in the train, but—. When I turned my eyes back to the train, maids were carrying our baggage out from the train. Ooh, so thorough!

“I will go with the servants. Since Ise and Asia seem anxious, as this is their first time.”

“Understood. I’ve prepared a few vehicles, so please board whichever pleases you.”

Grayfia-san consented to Buchou’s request.

Me, Buchou, Asia, Akeno-san, Xenovia and Grayfia-san boarded the first carriage in front of us. The other members who stayed back took the next carriage.

Once we had boarded it, the carriage begun to move forward while the horse's hooves made the sound of "Pakarapakara".

Amazing. I'm riding in a carriage for the first time!

Looking at the scenery, there were paved roads and beautifully pruned trees. The path stretched straight ahead…What, there was something on the path ahead…

A huge structure suddenly burst into my view.

"Bu-Bu-Bu-Bu-Buchou…W-What is that huge castle…?"

I was so shocked that my eyes leapt out of their sockets, and I pointed my finger at what seemed to be a huge castle from the window.

"That's the main residences of one of my homes."

With a pleasant smile on her face, Buchou unexpectedly said "one of my homes".

…Was I perhaps part of an amazing family of upper class devils?

Looking outside, beautiful flowers bloomed, water flowed out of a magnificently modelled fountain, and birds of various colours flew about. The carriage was advancing through what seemed to be the garden of Buchou's home.

"We seem to have arrived."

After Buchou murmured that, the carriage door opened. A butler-like man made a slight bow.

Buchou disembarked first, and then the rest of us followed from behind as well. The second carriage had also arrived, and Kiba and the others were getting off too.

The maids and butlers stood in line on both sides of us and made a path! A red carpet stretched out towards the huge castle, and the huge castle gate made a "Gigigi" noise as it opened.

“Ojou-sama, and all the members of her group. Please, advance forward.”

Grayfia made a slight bow and urged us forward.

“Come on, let’s go.”

It was when Buchou started walking on the carpet. A small silhouette broke out from the line of maids and ran towards Buchou.

“Rias-nee-sama! Welcome back!”

A cute-looking young boy with red hair embraced Buchou.

“Millicas! I’m back. You’ve gotten big, haven’t you?’

Buchou also lovingly hugged the boy back.

“U-Umm, Buchou. Who is this child?”

When I asked, Buchou introduced the boy once more.

“This child is Millicas Gremory. The son of my brother—Sirzechs Lucifer-sama. He’s my nephew.”

—Sirzechs-sama’s son!

In other words, the Maou’s son! Uoh! Isn’t he a true prince then!?

“Come on, Millicas. Greet them. This boy is a new member of my group.”

“Yes. I am Millicas Gremory, nice to meet you.”

“I-I accept your polite greeting! I-I’m…No, I am Hyoudou Issei!”[5]

Uwaaaaaah, I was tense and about to blow a fuse with a child smaller than me!

Buchou also spoke while giving an amused smile.

“Because only the person himself who succeeded the title of Maou

can retain the name, this child is a Gremory even though he's my brother's son. He's also next in line for family head after me."

Heh, so he's next in line after Buchou. Certainly, he's the son of the family's eldest son. Sirzechs-sama may have left the family, but his son is an heir of the important Gremory family.

Rather, who was Sirzechs-sama's wife? Since he has a child, he should also have a partner…

"Come on, let's go into the residence."

Buchou held hands with Millicas-sama and headed towards the gate. Asia and I just followed them, desperate not to be left behind. Gasper stuck to my back and didn't let go either.

We passed through the huge gate and went inside. The inner castle gates also opened one by one.

We then arrived at what seemed to be the entry hall. There were stairs which led to the second floor in front of us! There was a huge chandelier on the ceiling! Huge! This hall was huge! So huge that there was room to house an athletics meet!

"Ojou-sama, I'd like to show everyone to their rooms at once."

Grayfia-san raised her hand and some maids gathered with us. The maids were all beautiful women! Was this part of the service!?

"You're right, I have to go greet mother and father after coming home as well."

Buchou gave a "Hmm" as she seemed to think of things to do after this.

"The master is out at present. He's expected to return by this evening. He said that he would meet together with you while dining with everyone together at supper."

"I see, I understand, Grayfia. Then, I suppose we'll let everyone rest in their respective rooms for now. Has the baggage been carried in already?"

“Yes. There should be no problem with using your room right now.”

Ah, so we can finally rest. Somehow, my body and mind felt tired after just arriving at this castle…Whether it was because I had come to a world I didn’t know and shown such unreal things of such a huge scale one after another or not, I felt dizzy. Asia was also unsteady on her feet beside me.

“Ara, Rias. So you’ve returned.”

At that moment, a woman’s voice was heard from above.

An amazingly beautiful young woman wearing a dress came down the stairs. I thought that she wasn’t that much older than us. Her breasts were huge!

…Huh? She was very similar to Buchou. The colour of her hair was flaxen, but besides that she was almost identical to Buchou! Her eyes were a bit narrower, however…

Could she be Rias’s older sister? But the people of Rias’s family basically only had red hair…Uwah, Buchou’s sister was incredibly beautiful. I felt like I was in love…

As soon as she saw that person, Buchou smiled.

“Mother. I’ve returned home.”

……Eh? M-M-M-Mother…? That beautiful young woman is? Buchou’s?

“M-M-Motheeeeeeeeeeeer!? But, no matter how you look at her, this young woman is not that much older than Buchou!”

I was shocked to the point that my eyes bulged and I shouted out unintentionally. No, no, no matter how you look her, she’s an older sister! She doesn’t feel like a mother! She was more like Buchou’s older sister!

“Ara, to say such a happy thing, that I’m a young woman.”

Buchou’s…mother touched her cheek with her hand and smiled.

Uah, her smiling face is also pretty!

“As years go by, devils can freely change their appearances with magic. My mother always has the appearance of the same age as the current me.”

I see, I see. Wait, she may be her mother, but…no matter how you look at her, she looks like an onee-sama whose age doesn’t change that much from Buchou’s. This is bad! Though my favourite woman is normally Buchou, I like onee-samas even more! My heart throbbed! Buchou’s breasts were inherited from her mother! I cried at this wonderful thing! Hurray for genetics!

Buchou pinched my cheek.

“…You know nothing will come out of it even if you make hot eyes at my mother, right?”

Auu, it seems my onee-sama read my mind…Because, with such a beautiful lady, I couldn’t help but look!

“Ara, Rias. This boy is Hyoudou Issei, right?”

“You know about m-me — me?”[6]

Buchou’s mother nodded at my question.

“Yes, I snuck a look at your face at my daughter’s engagement party, since I’m her mother.”

Ah…This is bad. So she was at that party. I was too absorbed in rescuing Buchou, so I didn’t notice…

I had marched into her daughter’s important engagement party, destroyed everything, and took Buchou away! Was I going to be scolded!? Or punished!?

I was terrified, but Buchou’s mother just gave a small smile.

“Nice to meet you, I’m Rias’s mother, Venerana Gremory. Please treat me well from now on, Hyoudou Issei-kun.”

Part 5

Several hours after that meeting in the entrance hall, we were in the dining room. An extravagant meal so large that I could never eat it all was piled on top of expensive-looking plates, and I didn't know where to start. It all seemed so incredibly delicious!

We servant devils and our master Buchou took a seat at the table. And then, we were followed by Buchou's father, mother, and then Millicas-sama.

Dinner time—I suppose it could be called that. Apparently, there seemed to be "night" in the originally sunless and moonless Underworld as well.

The sky was also dark. When I looked up at the sky, there was a false moon floating up there. They said that it wasn't the real one, but it had been reproduced using magic. The night's darkness in the Underworld was made the same as back home. Apparently it was originally purple in this world. Then, when I entered this place before, it was daytime in this world, huh.

The flow of time here seemed to match the human world. It seemed that the underworld had its own flow of time here, but it seemed that, for the sake of reincarnated devils and those that lived in the human world, the Maous had adjusted it to match using a special method. So that it wouldn't be an "Urashima Taro situation"[7] for them. The reverse of that as well. The Fallen Angel region of this world also seems to be the same.

I was relieved that I wasn't in a situation where "hundreds of years have passed when I return" or "though I was in the Underworld for hundreds of years, only a few days have passed in the human world".

"Please enjoy yourselves without holding back."

That is how dinner began with a word from Buchou's father.

A huge oblong table, an extravagant chandelier on the ceiling, even the chairs we sat on were covered in expensive-looking ornaments…Right now I just looked at the chandelier. Were there chandeliers on the ceilings of guest rooms that had been prepared for us as well? No, ordinary lamps seemed nostalgic now.

The canopy bed was also huge. It was too big for just me to sleep in!

The insides of the rooms were many tatami-mats wide…Each of the rooms also seemed to have all the necessities needed to live in a bath, toilet, refrigerator, television, and kitchen. I think there were also a bedroom, living room, and other rooms in them…Asia and Xenovia were also impressed when they came to my place at almost the same time immediately after we had been shown to our rooms.

“Hauuu, t-this room is way too big for just one person!”

“…I can’t settle down. Sorry, but can I stay in Ise’s room? Asia can come too.”

For these two who had lived simple lives at the church, the size of the rooms seemed to have been a serious shock, and because they couldn’t calm down about it they had taken their entire luggage to my room and asked to move in.

After that, it was organised so that Asia and Xenovia would stay in my room through Grayfia-san’s arrangements, but…well, it still felt like there was extra space in the room even then, so it was fine. Since I had no confidence that I could use up all that room by myself, having more people with me calmed me down.

I turned my thoughts back to my seat at dinner, but…no, but how I am supposed to eat all this cuisine before me? I could ask all the butlers and maids that were constantly standing behind us, but the other club members hadn’t asked about anything in particular…

I held my fork and knife without putting them to the extravagant cooking that I beheld for the first time. I was hungry. But if I ate crudely here, Buchou would completely lose face. Ah, Kiba and Akeno-san were eating gracefully. As expected of the [Queen] and

[Knight].

Asia and Xenovia were also having a hard time, though they still looked good. These two had, like me, introduced themselves in this place not that long ago, because we were newcomers.

The little Millicas-sama was eating skilfully. As I thought, he'd been trained in this. As someone from an ordinary household, I couldn't follow the life style of the aristocracy at all!

When I casually turned my gaze to Gasper in front of me, he was eating with watery eyes that were squeezed shut. Today may have been a tough day for the hikikomori, after coming to a place with lots of people here in the Underworld.

Koneko-chan—hadn't starting eating at all. Even though, usually, she would have been the first to heartily dig into the meal… Koneko-chan had been acting strange somehow since the other day.

Our eyes met, and I waved my hand, but she averted her eyes while remaining expressionless. She always showed little emotion on her face, but there was even less reaction than usual. Muu, what's wrong, Koneko-chan…?

Azazel-sensei hadn't made it for the meal. It seems that the meeting couldn't help lasting a long time.

"*Clear throat*. Members of Rias' group, please think of this place as your home. Having just come to the Underworld, you're in an environment you don't understand. If there's something you want, please say so to the housemaids without reserve. They'll prepare it right away."

Buchou's father cheerfully told us this. No, there's nothing in particular that I want anymore. Ah! Is it okay if I borrow the maid onee-sans for a night? I want ecchi service from the maids! Of course, it'd be the best if they could attend to me all night!

—As if. I've been looking at too many Galge[8] and manga, haven't I…?

"By the way, Hyoudou Issei-kun."

Buchou's father turned to face me. Uwah, I'm nervous! What will he ask?

"Y-Yes!"

However, the topic Buchou's father brought up was unexpected.

"Have your parents been well?"

"Y-Yes! The two of them are fine! W-When I told them that I was going to Buchou's…Rias-sama's hometown; they just expected a souvenir from me! F-For them to say such a thing after their house was so wonderfully rebuilt, they really are selfish parents…Ahaha."

I said all that as a joke, but…

"Hmm. A souvenir, huh. I see."

Buchou's father rang a hand bell beside him. A butler-like person then immediately approached.

"What is your order, master?"

"Yes. Prepare a castle for Hyoudou Issei-kun's parents."

A caaaaaaaastle!? A castle as a souvenir!? What the heck is that!? Is this some kind of Underworld joke!?

"Yes. Shall it be Western-style? Or Japanese-style?"

The butler also responded normally! Is it normal to give a castle as a present!?

"What a worrisome choice."

"P-Please wait a moment! G-Going that far for a souvenir is a little too much!"

I quickly tried to restrain Buchou's father. O-Our cultures and living levels are too different!

"Dear, since the land in Japan is too small, it's impossible for a commoner to have a castle."

That was the voice of Buchou's mother. Thank you very much for your help! Yes, I'm just a commoner!

"What? Certainly, Japan is small. Hmm, if a castle is no good, I wonder what else would be a good present…"

"Father, worrying about it that much will just trouble them. Ise's parents don't possess strong worldly desires anyway."

So said Buchou! Yeah, because Buchou knew my father and mother well, her words were persuasive!

Buchou's father also said "I see" and nodded deeply. Thank goodness. The castle was averted. My family wouldn't know what to do with a castle, and it would have surely become a hot topic of conversation among people!

Please don't make my family stand out like that…

"Hyoudou Issei-kun."

"Y-Yes!"

For some reason, Buchou's father kept calling out to me. Was he very interested in me? Because I possessed the power of the Sekiryuutei? Besides that, I don't really have any characteristics that make me stand out.

"You may call me "father-in-law" from today on."

What unexpected words. Now that I think of it, hadn't Sirzechs-sama also asked me to call him "onii-san"? Was this the same thing?

"C-Call you "father"[9]…? T-That's too great an honour for me!"

I waved both of my hands from the side and showed my restrained will. As expected, such an honour was impossible for me!

"Dear, you're being too fast. There's such a thing as order first."

Buchou's mother scolded her husband.

“Y-Yeah. However, it’s even crimson and red. Doesn’t it make you happy?”

“Dear, I said that it’s still too early to celebrate.”

“That’s true. It seems I just tend to be too hasty.”

Buchou’s father let out a deep breath. It seemed that he was completely dominated by his wife.

So the words of Buchou’s mother had a lot of power in this household. If I watch Buchou’s family closely, tonight’s dinner may be a huge profit for me.

The person in question, Buchou, was in a state of embarrassment and didn’t continue eating.

“Hyoudou Issei-san. Is it fine if I can call you Issei-san?”

Buchou’s mother asked this. Somehow, it seems I was the centre of attention at tonight’s dinner!

“Y-Yes! Of course!”

Naturally, I had no particular problem with it, so I consented!

“Will you be staying here for a while?”

“Yes. While Buchou…Rias-sama is here, I’ll be here too…But, what about it?”

“I see. That’s perfect. Since I have to have you acquire gentlemanly behaviour as well. You’ll study manners a little while here.”

Huh? I have to acquire gentlemanly behaviour? What do you mean by that?

Bang!

The sound of the table being hit! When I looked over, Buchou had stood up at her seat.

“Father! Mother! I’ve been listening quietly until now, but what

kind of thing are you trying to advance while leaving me out of it!?"

Buchou's mother narrowed her eyes at those words. There was none of the smiling face from when she had pleasantly greeted us before.

"Be silent, Rias. You already canceled your engagement with Raiser, remember? The fact that we just permitted it should be thought of as special treatment. How much effort do you think your father and Sirzechs had to put in in order to take care of things with the other high-class devils? Do you know that he told one noble that "my selfish daughter canceled her engagement using the legendary dragon"? You may be the younger sister of the Maou, but there is still a limit."

—My selfish daughter canceled her engagement using the legendary dragon.

Based on the words of Buchou's mother, that party that I barged into was being thought of like that…Did I do something selfish?

But I didn't want Buchou to be taken away by him, and Buchou also said that she didn't want to marry Raiser either. But, the action I took then—was it right? No, I'd like to think that it was right.

"Onii-sama has nothing to—"

Buchou's face became clouded by anger and she tried to speak out, but Buchou's mother didn't let her.

"You mean Sirzechs is unrelated to what you do? Officially, that is true. However, everyone sees you as the Maou's younger sister. Right now, when the three great powers have formed an alliance, your position is known even by the lower classes of the other powers. You can't behave selfishly as you have in the past. And, above all else, everyone will pay attention to you from now on. Rias, you have been placed into that kind of position, you know? There will be no second instance of that kind of selfishness. Do not carry any spoiled thoughts. Understood?"

Buchou seem to be mortified by those words and couldn't retort

back. Still looking unconvinced, she forcefully sat down in her seat.

After letting out a single breath, Buchou's mother turned to us with a smile.

"I've shown something ugly to Rias' group members, haven't I? Getting back to the topic, you will go through special training during your stay here, Issei-san. Since, you have to experience the upper society and nobility even if only a little."

Seriously? I have to learn what it means to be a noble? Then what about Kiba? And Gasper? Why only me? Could it possibly have something to do with the discussion my parents had with Buchou's father the other day? Like "Please teach our stupid son about the refined world"?

…Whether it was because of my parents or not, I can't gauge the true intentions of Buchou's family. I pointed at myself and asked.

"U-Umm, why me?"

Then, Buchou's mother stopped smiling and spoke to me frankly with a serious expression.

"You—are the last bit of selfishness of my daughter, the next family head. As parents we bear the responsibility right until the end."

When I turned to look at Buchou, her gaze met with mine and then she turned her face away, which had become red.

It's no good. I don't understand it all! Just what kind of situation was I in…?

Life 2: The gathering of the young devils!

Part 1

“In other words, for high-class devils, high society is—”

It's the day after I arrived at Buchou’s home in the Underworld.

Since morning, I had been forced to listen to things about high-class devils, the upper echelons of society and nobility from a tutor devil. Yes, it was the aforementioned studying.

This was my exclusive tutor appointed for me by Buchou’s parents. They said he was “one of them”. Did that mean that there were others? I give up. This was just too strange, to think that I of all people would be studying about the aristocratic world.

Well, since I didn’t know a lot about the Underworld in the first place, it worked out well. He also gladly answered my questions.

Since, this seemed to be something important. I wrote furiously with my pen in my notebook, so as to not fall behind. Hmm, was it possible that I also had homework over the summer holidays now?

Millicas-sama was also here in the seat next to me and was studying along with me. Despite being small, he was diligent. He seemed quite intelligent.

The other club members were sightseeing around the Gremory’s land along with Buchou. How nice! How nice!

They seemed to be touring around Buchou’s exclusive castle and the castle that Sirzechs-sama used when he returned to his birthplace! They were sightseeing around the Gremory castles! I wanted to go too!

“Young master, do you know the devil alphabet?”

“N-No, I really don’t know it.”

“Very well. Then, remember them one by one from now on.”

In this way, the tutor devil carefully and patiently taught me, who didn't even know the basics.

However, what was with the "young master"? Since last night, I had been addressed that way by the Gremory's maids, butlers and even this tutor.

"It's because I have to teach you everything about the Gremory family, young master. Please prepare yourself."

"U-Umm, what's with the "young master" thing?"

"……Now then, let's speak about the history of the Gremory family next."

Ah, he dodged the question again. Why do I even have to know the history of Buchou's family as well as the structure of the nobility? Is it because I'm her servant? Did Kiba and the others have to do this kind of studying too? Ah, but then why aren't Asia and Xenovia, who are also new devils, getting this education too? Geez, I don't understand it at all!

Gacha.

The door opened, and Buchou's mother came in. As I thought, she really is beautiful.

"Grandmother!"

I see, for Millicas-sama, she's the equivalent of his grandmother. Though no matter how I look at her, she looks like Buchou's older sister.

"Issei-san, Millicas. How is your studying progressing?"

She came between me and the tutor while giving a gentle smile. I tried not to show her my clumsy devil writing, but she smiled as she saw the notes I had written down.

"It's just as Sirzechs and Grayfia reported. You work hard at everything, no matter what it is. I can't say that your writing is very good, but I can grasp your attitude of trying hard to memorise it."

Buchou's mother admitted a maid into the room and served tea.

"Rias will be returning soon. Since, there is a customary function for the gathering of young devils in the Maou's territory today."

Now that she mentioned it, that had been included in the to-do schedule while in the Underworld.

The young devils of about Buchou's age seemed to be assembling in one place. They were all devils who had yet to debut in official Rating Games. I'd heard that the high-class devil heirs from old and noble families were gathered by the leaders to come to know one another as they greet each other.

Buchou and student council president, Sona Sitri also had to go. We servants would be accompanying her as well.

I've been busy ever since coming to the Underworld. Now then, what will happen next?

Part 2

Immediately after Buchou and the others returned from their sightseeing tour of the Gremory castles, we went by train to the territory where Maou-sama was. After passing through several magic circles that appeared in mid-air for long-distance jumps, the train continued onward.

Three hours of being jolted around in the train later. We arrived at the urban area!

Both the station and the homes were modern! There were even vending machines here! The design was a little different from the world I lived in, but the houses I'd seen so far looked very cutting-edge!

"This is the city of Luciferd within the Maou's territory. It's the old capital of the Underworld where the previous Lucifer-sama lived."

So Kiba explained. So this was the town where the old Lucifer-sama lived. Incidentally, we were dressed in our summer uniforms. It seemed to already be our family's uniform.

"We're going to change over to the subway from here. Since there'll be an uproar if we go from the surface."

Kiba said this. So there's also a subway here! This place really isn't that different from the human world!

Thinking about it, humans and devils are closely related. It could be said that, starting from the contract and the reincarnation of humans into [Evil Pieces] as servants, there was a relationship of coexistence between them. I wonder if this is the way their race lives, by taking in other cultures and sublimating it into their own.

"Kyaaah! Princess Rias-samaaaaaaa!"

Suddenly, I heard a high-pitched cheer. When I looked, a group of devils on the station platform were looking at Buchou and giving

her longing gazes. Ooh, was Buchou a popular person here?

“Buchou is the Maou’s younger sister. What’s more, she’s also beautiful, so she’s a yearned-after target among low- and middle-class devils, you know?”

Akeno-san explained this. Seriously!? So Buchou is a super-celebrity in the Underworld?

Ah, she is the Maou’s younger sister. What’s more, she’s the next head of the noble upper class Gremory family. Moreover, she was, in a word, an extremely beautiful young woman! You could say that it’s inevitable that she became popular!

“Hiiiiiiiiii…So many devils…”

From behind my back, Gasper reacted to the voices of the many devils and panicked. The tough day continued for the hikikomori.

“How troublesome. Let’s switch over to the underground train quickly, before it becomes an uproar. Has the private train been prepared?”

Buchou questioned one guy from the pairs of black-suited men. They seemed to be our bodyguards, and many of them had followed us from the Gremory castle. These people were said to be quite strong. Naturally, a certain amount of strength was necessary for protecting the Princess and us servants.

“Yes. Please follow me.”

Thus, we followed behind the bodyguard and moved to the underground subway train.

“Rias-samaaaaaaaa!”

She was very popular among men too. Buchou waved her hand at a group of men while giving a strained smile.

As I thought, my master is amazing!

After transferring from the subway, we were jolted around for another five minutes.

When we arrived—it was at a platform in the basement of the biggest building within the city.

The meeting place for the gathering of young devils, old families, and high-class big-shots was in this building. The bodyguards accompanied us until we reached the elevator, and then stood waiting on standby.

We boarded the elevator from the basement with Buchou in the lead. It was a spacious elevator.

“Everyone, I’ll say it one more time. No matter what happens, stay in a calm state of mind. No matter what is said, don’t start a fight. —The people above are our future rivals. We mustn’t show an unsightly form.”

Buchou’s words had more fighting spirit than usual, and were very intense. That was the tone of voice of someone who is prepared for battle and doesn't intend to lose to anyone!

Me and Asia swallowed and calmed down our feelings. Alright! Even though I’m tense and nervous, there are other [Pawns] here besides me, so I can’t show an unsightly form!

After traveling up to the top floor pretty quickly, the elevator then stopped at last and the door opened.

When we took a step outside, we found ourselves in a wide hall. When we got out from the elevator, a person who seemed to be an employee was there and bowed slightly to Buchou and us.

“Welcome, Gremory-sama. Please come this way.”

We followed after the employee. After we went down a certain passage, the figures of several people were in a corner—

“Sairaorg!”

Buchou seemed to know one of those figures.

That person also noticed Buchou and approached us. It was a boy. Based on his appearance, he seemed to be about the same age as us.

He was a rough yet good-looking guy with short black hair. He had an energetic appearance, and had a very good physique with plenty of muscles. He looked like a pro-wrestler. Rather, was he a devil from a martial artist family? His eyes were strangely purple.

Somehow, I felt like his face was similar to Buchou's—no, to Sirzechs-sama.

"It's been a while, Rias."

He shook hands with Buchou while smiling. Ooh, was he one of the young devils? As I thought, was he a high-class devil? In any case, even a low-class devil like me could sense the intense surge of magic power coming from him.

The devils that seemed to be part of this person's group turned their gazes towards us…They were all strong-looking devils…

"Yeah, I missed you. It's good to see that you're doing well. There are also people here who haven't met you yet. This person is Sairaorg. He's my cousin on my mother's side."

Buchou introduced this devil to us—Wait, cousin!? Ah, that's why he somehow seems similar to Sirzechs-sama.

"I'm Sairaorg Bael, the next head of the Bael family."

Bael! Bael, as in the famous "Great King" just after the Maou!? Even the ignorant me knew that! Wait, doesn't that mean that Buchou's mother was originally from the Bael family?

The family of the "Great King"! The clan of the "Great King"! That's incredible, oi! The Gremory family has both the Maou and the Great King!

Ignoring the shocked me, Buchou resumed the conversation with the next head of the Bael family.

“So, what are you doing in a passage like this?”

“Ah, we came out here because it’s so idiotic in there.”

“…Idiotic? Have the other members also arrived then?”

“Agares and Astaroth have already arrived. Zephyrdol came last. Immediately after he arrived, Zephyrdol and Agares started arguing.”

This good-looking guy Sairaorg-san had an expression of complete dislike?

Rather, what did they start arguing about?

I felt like asking, but—.

Doooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo!

The building shook greatly and I heard a huge smashing sound! Eeh!? What!? I heard it from somewhere nearby!?

Worried by it, Buchou without hesitation went to the big door from which the noise had come from.

“Geez, this is why I advised not meeting before the meeting.”

Sighing, Sairaorg-san followed after Buchou along with the people who seemed to be his servants.

What!? What was it? We had no choice but to follow behind our master Buchou, though we were plagued by questions and anxiousness.

Beyond the opened big door—was a banquet hall that was all smashed up! The tables, chairs and decorations were all destroyed!

All the devils were split into two camps who glared at each other at the centre of the room! Weapons had been taken out, and there was an explosive air to the whole situation!

One side was made of evil-looking goblin-like devils. The other side

seemed to be made of relatively ordinary devils. However, both groups gave off an aura that was full of cold killing intent, to the point of being frightening.

Scary! Very scary! What a great quantity and quality of aura they have! It felt far greater than ours!

Within my field of vision, a table still safely remained in a corner of the hall and elegant-looking servant devils could be seen. In the centre of these gentle-looking male devils…was a person drinking tea.

“Zephyrdol, can you not help starting a fight at a place like this? Do you want to die? Do you really want to die? Even if I kill you, I won’t be blamed by the people on top.”

The two groups glared at each other. A female devil had said it coolly. Saying something fearful like “I’ll kill you”…

Ooh, but what an incredibly beautiful woman she is! Was she about the same age as me? She wore glasses—and her cold and sharp gaze was scary. As I thought, she really is scary. The wave of magic power being emitted from her aura was incredibly chilling…

She wore a blue robe and exposed very little skin. That was slightly regrettable.

“Hah! I’ll say it again, bitch! I said that I’d teach you in one shot in a private room with great trouble! The Agares’ onee-san really doesn’t like being without her guards, now does she? Heh, is that why you’re still a virgin who hasn’t let a man come near her till now!? Geez, all the women of families of the Maous stink of virgins and are unbearable! That’s why I said that I’d do a formal opening ceremony for you!”

Uwah…What a vulgar-mouthed onii-chan. He had a black magic-like tattoo on his face, and his green hair was standing on its end. As expected, there were also black magic-like tattoos on his upper body which was bare and uncovered. The ornaments on his pants jingled and clanked.

A delinquent, no matter how you look at him, he's a delinquent! Heh, so there are delinquents in the other world as well. His face… seemed good-looking, but his features were just too dangerous-looking…

…So, what happened between these two? Was the glasses onee-chan sexually harassed by the delinquent onii-chan?

Sairaorg-san came up to me who didn't understand from behind and explained.

"This place is a waiting hall where we remain on standby until the time comes. To explain it better, the young people gather here and give each other small greetings. However, this is what happens when the young people greet each other. By gathering many hot-blooded people together, problems like this also come out. The old devils of the old families and high-class devils can't help assuming that this is a good thing. I don't want to have anything to do with such a useless thing, but it can't be helped."

After adjusting his neck with a snap, Sairaorg-san stepped forward to the two teams who were glaring at each other.

Wait, wait! It's dangerous over there! You shouldn't approach either camp when they're in such a dangerous mood!

I tried to restrain him, but Buchou stopped me.

"Ise, watch him—watch Sairaorg carefully."

"Eh? Y-Yes, but why? Because he's your cousin?"

"—He is the number 1 among the young devils."

—! Seriously!? Number 1!? As in the strongest!?

Sairaorg-san came between the two sides who looked like they were about to start brawling. The eyes of the glasses onee-chan and the delinquent turned to him.

"Seegvaira, princess of the Agares family, and Zephyrdol, rebel child of the Glaysa-Labolas family. If you go any further than this, I

will be your opponent. Listen, I know this is sudden, but this is your last warning. Depending on your next words and actions, I will use my fists without mercy."

Sairaorg-san's words had such intensity in them! What an incredible threat! I also felt the tingling pressure of it on my body!

A vein started throbbing on the forehead of the delinquent devil at those words, and turned red with anger.

"For the incompetent Bael family to—"

Doga!

An intense blow resounded! Before the delinquent could finish speaking, he was slammed into the wall of the hall by a blow from Sairaorg-san!

Gara…

The delinquent fell off from the wall. —He seemed to have already lost consciousness and fell face-down on the floor!

—In one hit!

He took out the delinquent who had been releasing so much strong magic power in just one punch!?

"I told you. That was your last warning."

In reaction to the actions of the strong Sairaorg-san,

"You bastard!"

"Damn the Bael family!"

The delinquent's servants nearly rush forward from the momentum of losing their master, but—.

"Look after your master. That's the first thing you should do. Even if you turn your swords towards me, you will gain nothing. —The important function will be starting soon, so make sure your master

recovers first.”

[—!]

The delinquent’s family stopped moving at those words and then ran over to where their master had fallen down.

Next, Sairaorg-san turned to look at the glasses onee-chan. I could understand why her expression stiffened then.

“There’s still time. Put your make-up on again. It wouldn’t do to attend the function while wearing something so bad.”

“—. I-I understand.”

The glasses onee-chan turned back and then left the hall along with her family.

After confirming that, Sairaorg spoke to his own family.

“Call the staff. The hall is too messed up, and I won’t be able to have tea with Rias like this.”

I had been charmed by Sairaorg’s behaviour and conduct.

This person is strong! And also cooooooool! This is the man who is number 1 among the young devils!

This may have been the first time in my life that I had such a cool guy so close to the same age as me.

“Ah, Hyoudou!”

Then, I heard a familiar voice from nearby. When I turned around, people who wore the familiar Kuou Academy uniform were there.

“So it’s Saji. Ah, Kaichou too.”

“Hello, Rias, Hyoudou-kun.”

It seemed that Saji and Sona Kaichou had also arrived in the hall.

Part 3

“I am Seegvaira Agares. The next head of the Agares family, rank Archduke.”

We of the Gremory group were given a greeting by the glasses onee-chan from before—the ojou-sama of the Agares family.

After that incident, the reception hall had been restored by the magic of the staff members who ran over and had mostly been returned to normal.

The young people had gathered amongst themselves again and were exchanging greetings. We were all sitting around a table, with the delinquent from before and his servants left out.

Buchou, of the Gremory family; Kaichou, of the Sitri family; Sairaorg-san, of the Bael family; and that delinquent from before seemed to be of the Glaysa-Labolas family.

However, this onee-chan was the next head of an Archduke family! The Archduke is Maou-sama’s agent who passes judgment onto the lives of us devils!

According to what I've heard from Buchou, if the Maou-sama was the president of a company, the Great King would be the vice-president and the Archduke would be an executive director. It seems strange for there to be four presidents, but that’s how devil society is.

“Nice to meet you. I’m Rias Gremory, the next head of the Gremory family.”

“I’m Sona Sitri, the next head of the Sitri family.”

Buchou and Kaichou continued the greetings.

The masters had sat down, and their servants were on standby behind their masters. It was the same everywhere.

“I’m Sairaorg Bael, I’m the next head of the Bael family, rank Great King.”

Sairaorg-san introduced himself majestically. As I thought, he really has a majestic air. The number 1 among young people really is on a different level.

A boy with a gentle atmosphere who had gracefully been drinking tea all through the uproar earlier also spoke.

“I’m Diodora Astaroth, the next head of the Astaroth family. Please take care of me, everyone.”

His voice was quite gentle. He seemed innocent enough, but he was a devil. This person may also be amazing underneath.

Astaroth…Umm, if I recall correctly, that’s the family that the current Beelzebub comes from.

Since the delinquent from before was a Glaysa-Labolas, he should be from the same family as the current Asmodeus-sama.

Is it okay for the next head of the family to be someone like that? I heard from others that, with the influence of the overly free-spirited Maou-samas, their siblings were all serious and diligent.

“The Glaysa-Labolas family seemed to have had some family trouble the other day. The person who was supposed to be the next head of the family just had an unforeseen accidental death. Zephyrdol from just before is said to have become the new candidate for the next head.”

So explained Sairaorg-san.

Seriously? The Glaysa-Labolas family is going through something terrible. But then, I think such a person being the next candidate is also terrible…Well, it may be better not to poke my nose into the affairs of other families.

And so, six young devils were present here in total. The servants of these devils also seemed to be strong…I seem to look the weakest here…I feel awkward.

There were the Gremory that has Lucifer, the Sitri that has Leviathan, the Astaroth that has Beelzebub, the Glaysa-Labolas that has Asmodeus, and also the Great King and Archduke as well. These were the six families.

What incredible faces! What dream members! I see, this is the reason why these young devils are so promising. Certainly, these members who will apparently take responsibility for the future could be called promising.

Perhaps because they were in the world of the high-class, they all had a different kind of behaviour and aura. So what did the old families and the high-class devil leaders want to see by gathering these members here?

“Hey, Issei. Don’t show a stupid face.”

Saji said this to me while sighing.

“But, isn’t this a meeting of high-class devils? I can’t help being tense. They all seem strong.”

“What are you saying? You’re the Sekiryuutei, right? Shouldn’t you be a bit more dignified?”

“Even if you say that…Wait, why are you getting angry about it, Saji?”

“The servant devils have to behave with dignity in this place. Since the opponents are watching not only the masters, but their subordinates as well. So if you act like that, you’re being rude to senpai as well. Be a bit more aware, you’re the Sekiryuutei of the Gremory group, after all.”

I was a bit astonished at getting such fierce comments from Saji.

“It’s because you’re senpai’s prided servant. Even I would like to be the pride of Kaichou.”

Saji gave a bitter smile, but…What is it? What had happened to him?

As I felt like asking, a door opened over there and an employee came in.

“Sorry for making you all wait for so long. —Everyone is waiting.”

At last, the function was starting!

The room that we young devils were all led to had a strange atmosphere about it.

There were seats placed in very high places here, and there were distinguished-looking people sitting there. What’s more, there were distinguished-looking devils on the level above that as well.

There was a face I recognised on the next level above that—Maou Sirzechs-sama. Beside him was Serafall-sama. She wasn’t dressed as a Maou shoujo today.

Beside those two were…faces I didn’t know, but could they be Beelzebub-sama and Asmodeus-sama? Since even I could feel their powerful magic power from here, my idea didn’t seem to be incorrect. However, both of their appearances were very young.

We were in a situation where we were being looked down upon by the higher-ups from a position high above us. Honestly, it wasn’t a very pleasant feeling. Because it was like the higher-ups were looking at us with condescending eyes. I hated this feeling.

We were standing by in line behind Buchou. Though, we’re not really doing anything in particular. Even so, we were tense. Because it was so extremely silent…Since I couldn’t stand it, I looked at girls from other families.

There seemed to be beast girls and former human girls as well. It’d be best if I could improve my relationship with them later.

As I was secretly going full throttle like that, the six young people, including Buchou, moved forward by one step. The delinquent had also recovered and stepped forward as well. The swelling of his cheek didn’t seem to have gone away yet and a vivid mark still

remained. Well, it was that strong of a punch. Unless Asia's healing Sacred Gear was used on it, it wouldn't disappear for a while.

Rather, I would never let Asia near that guy. Who knows what he might do.

"Good, you have gathered. In order to check the faces of you all, who will carry the burden of the next generation, you have been gathered here. This is also a meeting that is performed over a regular cycle, so that we can ascertain the young devils."

An elderly male devil spoke with a solemn voice while clasping his hands together.

"They seem to have fought right away, though…"

This time a full-moustached male devil spoke out sarcastically. He was referring to the matter from before. They really had fought right away. I was also surprised. Was this youthful indiscretion?

"You six are all devils of the next generation that have pedigree and true ability that no objection can be raised against. That's why, I want you to compete together before your debuts and increase your power in this way."

Sirzechs-sama said this from his seat on the topmost level.

So in other words, they'll be doing Rating Games with their servant devils here? Now that you mention it, Azazel-sensei talked about it, about them setting Rating Games during our training camp in the underworld. Could this be what he meant?

"Will we also eventually be sent out in the battle against the [Khaos Brigade]?"

Sairaorg-san suddenly asked that straight out. What an amazing thing to ask.

"I don't know. However, I don't want to send out young devils if possible."

Sirzechs-sama answered as such. Sairaorg-san raised his eyebrows

in seeming incomprehension at that answer.

“Why? Even if we’re young, we carry part of the responsibility of devils. If we just receive kindness from our predecessors even at this age and nothing further is done—”

“Sairaorg, I acknowledge your bravery. However, you’re reckless. Above all, I’d like to avoid sending you all, who are still in the midst of growing, to the battlefield. Besides, it would be too great a loss if we lost the devils of the next generation. I want you to understand. You are all more of a treasure to us than you think. That’s why I want you to experience important things step by step and grow.”

Sairaorg-san said “I understand” to Sirzechs-sama’s words, and seemed to consent to his words. But, his expression seemed dissatisfied.

After that, the difficult talk continued about difficult words from the higher-ups and about the upcoming games from the Maou-sama. It was all incomprehensible to me and my head felt like it would burst.

So it wouldn’t be ending soon. Wait, I’ll have no time to rest even when it ends, as the training will start for the training camp. But I’d like to face the training after I’ve had a short sleep in bed.

“Now then, I apologise for keeping you with this long talk. Well, we all see our dreams and hopes in you young ones. I want you to understand at least that. You are the treasures of the underworld.”

Everyone hung on Sirzechs-sama’s words. I understood that there were no lies in the Maou-sama’s words as I listened. As expected of Buchou’s onii-san. He was a fundamentally kind person.

He was a candid and interesting person by nature.

“To finish things, will you now let us hear your respective future goals?”

The first to respond to Sirzechs-sama’s request was Sairaorg-san.

“My dream is to become Maou.”

—! He declared that kind of thing suddenly! Amazing!

[Hoh…]

The higher-ups also let out breaths of wonder at Sairaorg’s goal, which he had declared upfront without hesitation.

“It’s unprecedented for a devil from the Great King family to leave it.”

A male devil higher-up said this.

“When the people of the underworld feel that there’s no choice but for me to become Maou, I will become one.”

He declared even further! He really is amazing, this person!

With no time for me to be surprised, Buchou spoke next.

“My goal for the near future is to live as the next Gremory head, and to win in each Rating Game battle.”

I see. So that’s Buchou’s dream and goal. I felt like I was hearing it for the first time. How reliable. So like Buchou. Alright! We servants will do our best for the sake of Buchou’s dream!

After that the other young people also stated their dreams, their goals, until the last one remaining at the end was Sona-kaichou.

Then, Sona spoke.

“I wish to build a school for the Rating Games in the Underworld.”

A school! Heh, so Kaichou wants to build a school.

But, while I felt admiration for her, the higher-ups scrunched up their eyebrows.

“If it’s learning about Rating Games, isn’t there already one for that?”

As if checking, a higher-up asked this to Kaichou.

Kaichou answered blandly.

“That is just a school where only high-class devils and devils of privileged rank are accepted. The school that I want to build is one where low-class devils and reincarnated devils can also attend without any distinction.”

Ooh, so a school without discrimination. That’s good. It would be a good place for the future Underworld. Saji was also proudly listening to Kaichou’s dream.

However—.

[Hahahahahahahahahahahahahahahahahaha!]

The laughter of the higher-ups ruled over the assembly hall.

I didn’t understand the meaning of it. The meaning of why the higher-ups were laughing. When I turned to look at Buchou, her eyes had narrowed and her face had become serious. Eh? Eh? What was going?

“That’s impossible!”

“This is just brilliant!”

“I see! So you’re a little girl who dreams!”

“It’s good to be young! However, for the next head of the Sitri family to state such a dream, I have to say thank goodness that it was here at this place of introduction before your debut.”

I don’t get it. Why was Kaichou—being looked down on?

“…Even if the current Underworld has changed much from the past, discrimination between the high-class devils, low-class devils, and reincarnated devils still exists. There are also still a lot of people who believe that to be natural as well.”

Kiba spoke blandly from beside me.

“What’s with that? But weren’t we welcomed normally by Buchou’s family?”

“Ise-kun. The Gremorys are a family that has profound affection. They don’t really discriminate against humans or low-class devils… But, please remember the House of Phoenix.”

“__”

At Kiba’s words, I remembered Raiser Phoenix in my mind. Certainly, that guy had looked down on me, both because I was low-class and a servant. He may have showed a discriminatory attitude towards me.

In the midst of all this, Kaichou spoke frankly.

“I’m serious.”

Serafall also nodded strongly in agreement. She almost seemed to be saying “Well said!” With her position as Maou, she couldn’t support her younger sister, but even so she seemed worried about her.

A higher-up spoke with cool-headed words.

“Sona Sitri-dono. Low-class devils and reincarnated devils merely work for their high-class devil masters and are only selected for their talent. Wouldn’t building such a training institution make the old families, who value tradition and pride, lose face? No matter how much people say that the world of devils has entered a period of change, change can be both good and bad. Something like teaching mere low-class devils really is nothing of your concern…”

The one who couldn’t remain silent anymore to these words was Saji.

“Why have you been looking down on Kaichou’s—on Sona-sama’s dream like that while I’ve been listening silently!? It’s strange! Why should you decide that it won’t come true!? We’re serious here!”

“Be careful how you talk, young reincarnated devil. Sona-dono, your servant hasn’t been properly trained.”

One of the higher-up devils said this. What are you saying!? You're much stranger! Why do you say such a thing, even though you told them to say their dreams!?

If Buchou was treated in the same way, I would also be shouting complaints like Saji!

"…I apologise. I'll speak to him later."

Kaichou said this while not changing her expression at all. Saji didn't seem to be able to understand her reaction.

"Kaichou! Why!? These people, they mocked your, our dream! Why, do you remain silent!?"

"Saji, be silent. This isn't a place where you can display such an attitude. I simply told them my future goal. That's all."

"—!"

Kaichou narrowed her eyes and scolded Saji. Saji also seemed to want to say something, but he held his tongue.

"In that case! If my Sona-chan wins magnificently in the games, you won't have any complaints, right? Since many things are granted by saving up good results in the games!"

Everyone was surprised by Leviathan-sama's sudden suggestion. The Leviathan-sama in question was in a surprisingly pissed off mood.

"Geez! You oji-samas are all joining forces to torment my Sona-chan! Even I have my limit of endurance! If you bully her that much, I'll torment you as well!"

Serafall-sama spoke to the devil higher-ups with watery eyes. The higher-ups in question blinked their eyes at the livid Maou Leviathan-sama, and had trouble reacting.

Kaichou—covered her face in seeming embarrassment. Ooh, this really is a situation in which nothing can be said.

However, I also felt a refreshing feeling from Serafall-sama's words.

I think that no one has the right to look down on one's dream. In addition to that, the Underworld has to change, right?

In that case, Kaichou's dream is a good ambition. Shouldn't the higher-ups acknowledge that kind of dream? When you live too long, you really do become inflexible.

There are a lot of parts of the old customs of the old families and noble families that I'm not familiar with. Well, I do have to remember the customs of the Gremory family.

"Very well. Then, let's play the games, between these young people."

Everyone paid attention to Sirzechs-sama's words. Seriously!? We're going to play in the games?

"Rias, Sona, would you not like to fight each other?"

—! So it's come to that! Maou-sama! Me and the rest of the servants were also shocked by this unexpected thing!

"……"

"……"

Buchou and Kaichou also stared at each other, and blinked in surprise.

Without minding them, Sirzechs-sama continued.

"Originally, it was planned for Rias' game to take place in a few days. Azazel has gathered Rating Game fans from each of the powers, also under the pretext of watching the games of the young people before their debuts. That's why it's fine like this. Let's hold the game with Rias and Sona."

Based on Sirzechs-sama words, the completed training camp prepared for us by Azazel-sensei was meant to prepare us for the widely anticipated match among spectators!

—Our opponent is Kaichou! The student council president!

Seriously!? A sudden showdown between the two devil groups that attend Kuou Academy!?

Buchou let out a breath, and then showed a defiant smile to Kaichou. Ooh! She intends to do it!

Kaichou also started to show a scornful smile. She also intends to do it full-throttle!

“It may not be an official one, but it feels like fate to me that you would be my first Rating Game opponent, Rias.”

“Now that we’re competing with each other, I won’t lose, Sona.”

Sparks were flying right away! Hey, hey, hey, hey! It was Buchou vs. Kaichou, the Occult Research Club vs. the Student Council!

“A match between Rias-chan and Sona-chan! Yes☆ It may fire things up!”

Serafall-sama also looked happy!

“The date of the competition is August 20th in human world time. You may each divide up your time as you like until then. The details will be sent again later.”

By Sirzechs-sama’s decision, the Rating Game between Buchou and Kaichou was going to start in this way!

Part 4

“I see, so it’ll be a showdown with the Sitri group.”

We had returned to the Gremory family’s main residence. The one who had welcomed us there was Azazel-sensei. We had gathered in the wide living room and given sensei an account of the meeting from a short while ago.

“Today is July 28th, in human world time. So we have about 20 days until the showdown day.”

For some reason, sensei began to calculate.

“I-Is it for the training?”

When I asked, sensei nodded.

“Naturally. I plan for you to start from tomorrow onwards. I’ve already considered each of your training menus.”

“But, is it okay for only us to receive advice from the Fallen Angel Governor? Isn’t that foul play?”

I felt that it wouldn’t have been strange if there were complaints from the other young people as well.

However, sensei just sighed.

“Not really. I intend to give data to the various members of the devil side, you know? Also, the angel side is said to also be doing a backing-up system. The rest depends on the pride of the young devils themselves. If they think from the bottom of their hearts that they want to get stronger and raise their original duration, they’ll take the help wholeheartedly.”

Ah, if you say it like that, I see.

“It’s to the extent that even my Vice-Governor is also giving advice to each of the families. Hahaha! Shemhaza’s advice may even be

more helpful than mine!”

…No way, please don’t say something that makes me uneasy like that. Geez, this Fallen Angel Governor is too cheerful. Though, it’s thanks to that that it’s easy to be around him.

“Well, it’s fine. Gather in the garden tomorrow morning. I’ll give each of you your training methods then. Be ready.”

[Yes!]

All the club members responded to sensei’s words once more. Alright! In any case, the game has been decided! We have to prepare for it and train! And above all else, I have to get closer to Vali even if only a little!

—As I thought that, Grayfia-san appeared there.

“Everyone, the hot spring bath is ready.”

—! That was the best report!

The Japanese-style hot spring existed in an isolated corner of the Gremory’s garden.

I immediately immersed myself in it completely along with Kiba and Azazel-sensei. Ah, I’m healing. This is a good hot spring.

“When going on a trip～♪”

While submerging himself into the hot spring, Azazel-sensei hummed a tune. Ooh, he’d also let out his twelve black wings.

“Hahahaha, as expected, when speaking of the Underworld—of hell, it’s the hot springs. Moreover, when it comes to the distinguished Gremory family’s private hot spring, one of the best in the Underworld, a great spring is also a great spring.”

Surprisingly, the Governor-sama seemed accustomed to hot springs. That’s right, he was wearing a yukata when I met him for the first

time. Could it be that he really likes Japanese culture?

Kiba and me had matching towels on our heads and had submerged ourselves in the hot water.

Since earlier, Kiba was being incredibly disgusting. Because he suddenly—.

“Ise-kun, shall I wash your back?”

What kind of thing are you saying while blushing? It’s like my chastity is being stolen by you!

…Well, I suppose it’s a precious thing, having some nude socialisation with a male—with a friend like him. Since we didn’t get to open up to each other at the previous training camp, there was a restrained part between us.

…Now that I think about it, where is Gya-suke[10]? Even if he’s a cross-dressing boy, is he really unable to do some nude socialisation?

Ah. As expected, he’s loitering at the entrance. Rather, it was inevitable!

I rose out of the hot water and headed over to Gasper.

“Hey, hey, come on, you have to enter since it’s a hot spring.”

I caught Gasper at the entrance.

“Kyah!”

Gasper screamed out in a cute manner.

“Kyah”…You really…Wait, don’t roll up your towel all the way up to your chest…You aren’t a girl……Damn it! He looked like a girl! He had a thin body and a girlish face! Why are you a man when you’re like this!?

Because I was staring and scrutinising Gasper, he blushed and spoke.

“…U-Umm, please don’t look at me like that…”

“…Y-You! Don’t put up your towel all the way to your chest if you’re a guy! Because you always dress like a girl, it’s confusing for me as well!”

“…N-No way, you were looking at me like that, Ise-senpai…? I feel like my body is in dangeeeeeeeer!”

“Shut up!”

I had felt that I could go to the Underworld if things were just as is! Yet, I snatched this guy in a princess carry, and immediately brought him over to the hot springs—.

Spla——sh!

I threw him in.

“Nooooooooo! It’s hoooooot! I’m meltiiiiiiing! Ise-senpai is perverteeeeeeed!”

His screaming echoed throughout the male baths! Idiot! Buchou and the others have already entered the female baths next to us!

[Ise, you can’t sexually harass Gasper, you know?]

Buchou’s teasing voice! After that, I heard the girls’ small giggling! Waaaaaaaaah! So embarrassing!

I couldn’t take it and plunged into the hot spring! Even after my head sunk down, I rose up immediately!

Uu, even though I just put the hikikomori into the hot spring…

“By the way, Ise.”

Coming next to the watery-eyed me, sensei had a lewd face.

“Yes?”

“Have you rubbed Rias’ breasts?”

Sensei asked that while squeezing the fingers of both of his hands in the air.

“Y-Yes! With my right hand!”

I also gestured with my right hand in the air! Buchou’s breasts had the best sensation! I think it’s something I won’t ever forget in my life! I feel like I could live with just that!

“I see. Then, how about—”

Nodding, sensei thrust his index finger forward horizontally and spoke.

“Have you poked a woman’s nipple with your finger?”

Sensei made sure to press the air with his finger.

“—! …N-No, not yet.”

Seeing my reaction, sensei sighed.

“What’s with you? You haven’t poked nipples with your finger? You poke a nipple not with a “press”, but with a “squish”. Burying the finger into the breast is the best part, you know?”

Wh……at……? B-B-B-Burying the finger in the breast…? P-Pressing the nipple like a button…Not with a “press”, but with a “squish”!?

In the case of huge breasts, I’m certainly interested in burying my finger deep within them! But!

“N-Nipples aren’t front door buzzers!!”

That’s right! Buchou’s breasts aren’t buzzers! Rather, the instant when Buchou’s breasts emerge, my love towards Buchou is wholehearted!

However, sensei shook his head at my words and grinned.

“No, it is close to a buzzer. When you push it, it rings [Hyaaan].”

—!?

I imagined a Buchou buzzer letting out an [Hyaaan] inside my mind.

…What is this…T-There was such a world out there?

“Breasts and nipples have such a function…I thought breasts were only for rubbing, sucking, and holding between them. I see, so it can be poked and made to make noise…”

When I thought about it, I had never thought of poking nipples like that. Why didn’t I ever realise this wisdom?

While I was absorbed in my rubbing and my sucking-impulse, I definitely forgot about poking!

—I’m so foolish!

Sensei patted my head.

“That’s why you still have some way to go. A woman’s breasts are infinite. Handled correctly, they are packed full of infinite possibilities more than the Uroboros Ophis, you know? Because I was fascinated with them, I plunged into the breasts of women and fell. I don’t regret it.”

—As I thought, this person is amazing. You understand too, Governor!

While tears flowed down my cheeks, I spoke to sensei with a trembling voice.

“Sensei— I want to poke breasts…”

Sensei gave me words of encouragement while gently patting my head.

“Yeah, don’t give up, Ise. If it’s you, you can do it. If you give up, that will be the end of breasts, right?”

“Yes. Yes!”

That's right. By not giving up, everything can also advance forward! By not giving up, Buchou's breasts can also be poked! And I'll make Buchou cry out! Buchou will cry out to my poke!

While I was like this, the voices of the girls reached my ears.

[Ara, Rias. Did your bust get bigger again? Can I touch it a little?]

[R-Really? Umm…Your way of touching is a little indecent. Rather, didn't your bra cup change more than mine, Akeno?]

[My old one was still fine even though it was a bit tight…However, recently, I've been thinking that it wouldn't be bad to show it off in a bigger way. A woman becomes bolder when she has a partner she'd like to show it to, Rias.]

[…T-That's true. However, please don't stimulate that child so much.]

[I'm envious of how big you two are…]

[Ara-ara, Asia-chan. Haven't yours also gotten bigger than before?]

[I-Is that so…? B-But, if they're only this big…I can't seem to be able to come to like it.]

[Asia, did you hear the talk of how they become bigger if you rub them? Like this—]

[Haan! D-Don't! Xenovia-san! Ah…Uuun…Ise-san still hasn't done this kind of thing to me…]

[Hmm, Asia is different from me and has a good touching sensation. I see. This maybe what delights men as well.]

[Ara-ara, it's good to be young, isn't it, Rias? By the way, based on this feeling, you really have been getting bigger every day, haven't you?]

[Aan…A-Akeno, cut it out, release your hands from my breasts. The movements of your hands are—Aaaun! Where did you learn such a thing…?]

[Rias' breasts…What a nice sensation…Ufufu. I'll do this here and…]

[No…Aaaun, even though I haven't made that child do this kind of thing yet…S-Stop it…I decided that that child would be my first… Aaann…]

……

Listening to the conversation of the girls in the women's bath next door, I—was becoming aroused. My nosebleed wouldn't stop! Ah, this is bad, this is bad. I hit the back of my head with a smack and somehow held down my nosebleed.

Rather, what a conversation for them all to be having…I was reacting in various places…

But, I want to peek! I want to peek! Over the wall that separates the men's and women's baths! I'd like to go over it and fly down to that world there! Damn it! Isn't there a peeking hole? I couldn't see it anywhere no matter where I looked since before…

Rather, should I try using my Sacred Gear to strengthen my finger and make a hole…?

"What's with you? You want to peek?"

Azazel-sensei asked me that with a dirty smile.

"That's not so bad. It's a thing between men. It's a rule to peek at the women's bath while in the hot spring. —However, that just makes you a second-rate pervert."

"Second-rate!? T-Then, what do you do if you're first-rate!?"

Sensei looked like he was considering for a moment.

"…That's right. Like this!"

Yank! Sensei grabbed my arm. And then—.

"It's feeling! If you're man, it has to be mixed bathing, Ise!"

Buuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuh! I was seized by a floating sensation and my field of vision moved dizzinglyyyyyyyyyy!

Owaaaaaaaaaah! I was blown off into the aaaaaaaaaaair!

My field of vision moved from the men's bath to the bath next door and—. My eyes met Buchou's while in the air! And so then—.

Doppooooooooon!

……Oww. I hit the surface of the hot spring water hard, and floundered in the water!

Splash! When I jumped out from the hot water—paradise on Earth was there before me!

Buchou! Akeno-san! Asia! Xenovia! Koneko-chan! Everyone was naked!

Buh!

A nosebleed gushed out! Naturally! When suddenly being transported from a place of just stupid men to a world of only women, it's only natural for the world to change!

The mixed bathing that I had always dreamed about! My tears wouldn't stoooooop!

Normally, in this kind of situation, things like buckets would be flying with screams of "Kyaah! Pervert!", and I would be torn apart, but—.

Buchou, Akeno, Asia, and Xenovia didn't even try to hide their naked bodies! C-Cover yourselves, everyone! You're girls, after all!

"Ara, Ise. Were you thrown over by Azazel? Was your body properly washed?"

"Ufufu, oh Ise-kun. You're so daring."

Rather, Buchou and Akeno-san were coming closer while smiling wryly! Their big white breasts were swaying up and down right in

front of me! Hurray for breasts!

I was at my wit's end and transfixed by the breasts that were approaching me. Akeno-san caught me an instant before Buchou did!

"Ise-kun♪ I caught you."

Squish.

She embraced me from the front, and Akeno-san's body became glued to my body! Let alone her breasts! Everything! All of Akeno's soft body was on meeeeeeeeee!

"A-Akeno-san! I-I-I-I-If you cling to me like that!"

My brain was affected by both the heat of the hot springs and the erotic heat, and my head was on the verge of boiling! Aaah, damn it! Akeno's body really is incredible! Why does her body feel so good!? Both its springiness and elasticity are amazing! Was this increased smooth feeling the effect of the hot spring!?

Squish!

Although I had been satisfied with Akeno-san's whole body, I was once again hit by some first-rate softness!

Buchou's face popped out over my shoulder! B-Buchou! This time it was Buchou clinging to me from behiiiiiiiiiiind!?

The sensation of Buchou's breasts hit me from behind! Aah, the tips of those things were stimulating my back! I think Buchou's nipples were more effective at soothing than a poor massage machine!

"Akeno! Get away from my Ise!"

Buchou wrapped her arms around my neck and tried to snatch me away from Akeno-san! However, Akeno-san was firmly clinging to me from my front!

"No way. I've decided to enjoy the hot springs with Ise-kun. I'm already heating up our bodies by clinging like this…Ise-kun's body

feels good just by touching it like this…”

Akeno-san clung to me even more firmly! Uwaaaaaah, Akeno-san’s breasts are being pressed so much that it’s like they’ll fuse with my body! Amaziiiiiiiing! This deadly softness! I also wanted to embrace Akeno-san’s body against my better judgment! But, if I did that, Buchou will get angry at her servant’s betrayal and kill me!

“Stop it! Ise’s body is mine! Who do you think trained and raised this child!? It’s the fruits of my labor that made the sensation of embracing him like this the best! From this child’s hair to his entire body, everything is mine! —Aah. Somehow, I’m feeling sensitive. Is this because of what Akeno-san did just before…or is it because I’m touching Ise…?”

Buchou’s embrace also became stronger! Uwaaaaah! Onee-sama’s breasts were being perfectly transmitted even from my back! The volume was like an extra-large all-you-can-eat buffet! Moreover, I could even hear her rough breathing! Buchou’s sexy voice was destroying my brain!

I mean, I was raised by Buchou!? So the finishing condition on this body of mine was also for the sake of being used as Buchou’s hugging pillow!? I’m happy! Please give me more sexual training and nurturing!

A-Akeno-san’s breasts were touching my chest, and B-Buchou’s breasts were touching my back!

I was caught between Buchou’s breasts and Akeno-san’s breasts from the front and baaaaaaaack!

Amaziiiiiiiiiiing! I was caught between breeeeeeeeeeeeasts!

[This is the legendary breast sandwich! A paradise exists in the unexplored regions of the Underworld!]

A voice like that from a survival program rushed through my mind!

With such stimulus from the breasts sandwich, I, in a pleasant dream space, couldn’t help but discharge a stream of nosebleed…

…Sensei had talked about it. If it's now, when I'm caught between them, I can poke! If I poke like with a front-door buzzer, Buchou may let out an [Hyaaan]. Amazing! The female body is amazing!

My finger was being buried in the nipple! What on earth was happening!? Was my finger being eaten up by Buchou's breasts!?

"Auu, even though I want to enjoy the hot springs with Ise-san too…"

"As I thought, it'll be an almost impossible task to snatch Ise away from those two. I have no choice but to watch from afar for today."

Asia and Xenovia were talking about something from a little further away, but…the impact of the breast sandwich was too strong…

Hah! Suddenly, I came to my senses! Based on this situation, Koneko-chan would be muttering "…Disgusting. Pervert-senpai.", and would blow me away somewhere with an especially large punch!

I timidly turned my gaze to look at Koneko-chan, but—.

Koneko-chan had half-submerged her face in the hot springs while wearing a gloomy-looking expression, and was blowing bubbles in the water…Huh? Is Koneko-chan still not feeling good…?

—But, at that moment, my consciousness began to recede.

Yeah, I understand. With the blood streaming down from my nose, I was losing myself in the heat from both the hot springs and the breast sandwich…

"…Nuhahhoh."

…I got the sensation that my soul was escaping from my mouth. Even getting too happy makes my soul fall out…

"Ise-kun!"

"Ise!"

Akeno-san and Buchou were making a panicked commotion. But, I was happy… just happy.

Matsuda, Motohama, there is definitely paradise in hell. Is this what it means for a Buddha to be in hell?

Next time, I'll tell you of the wonderfulness of the breast sandwich…

And so in this way, I lost consciousness.

Part 5

The next day, we all gathered in a corner of the Gremory family's huge garden.

Everyone was dressed in jerseys! Azazel-sensei was also wearing one. After, everyone had sat down at the table and in the seats that had been placed in the garden, the meeting before the start of our training began right away.

Last night's hot spring bath was the best! I'll never forget it! The rush of blood to my head had been serious, but I couldn't stop grinning since morning! Coming to the Underworld really was a good idea! I truly thought so!

—That feeling wouldn't change or go away.

Sensei had what seemed to be documents and data.

"Let me say this first. What I'm going to tell you now is a training menu that focuses on things in the immediate future. There are people who produce good results immediately, but there are also those who have no choice but to look at things in the long run. However, you are all growing young people. Even if you mistake your direction, you will grow well. Now then, first is Rias, you."

Buchou was the first one that Sensei called out to.

"From the beginning, you have been a high-spec devil with everything, including talent, physical ability and magic power. Even if you live normally as you currently are, those traits will rise and you'll become a candidate for being a highest-grade devil when you become an adult. However, your wish is to become stronger than you would in that future, right?"

Buchou nodded strongly at Sensei's question.

"Yes. I don't want to lose ever again."

It was just as Buchou said! We didn't want to lose in the games

again! Especially in a match that isn't formal!

"Then, follow the training recorded on this sheet exactly, even all the way up to the battle day."

After looking at the piece of paper that sensei handed to her, Buchou tilted her head in puzzlement.

"…But, this training doesn't seem all that special, though?"

"That's right. It's a basic training method. That's just fine for you. You've already collected everything. That's why your power can only be raised by basic practice. The problem is the quality of the [King]. Over time, the [King] seeks brains more than strength. You know that even if they're not good at magic, devils can climb to the top with a good head and cleverness, right? Learn all you can about the Rating Games until the deadline. Drive everything, from game documented images to documented data, into your head. What a [King] needs are the thought, quick-wittiness and judgment to defeat any kind of situation. It's your job to make sure that your group's servant devils can display their power to the fullest. However, also remember that, until the actual game, you won't be able to know what will happen. It's the same as a battlefield."

…Ooh, we made fun of the basics but, Sensei actually put a lot of thought into it.

As I thought, because of his persuasiveness, I feel that Buchou and the rest of us have no choice but to practice first.

"Next, Akeno."

"…Yes."

Although she was addressed by Sensei, Akeno-san was sullen. Akeno-san doesn't seem to like Azazel-sensei at all. She had also said that she hated him a little. As I thought, was it related to her father?

As I thought that, Sensei spoke of that topic right from the front.

"You must accept the blood that flows within you."

“—!”

Perhaps because of being told that so bluntly, Akeno-san also frowned. But Sensei continued without paying it any attention.

“I’ve seen the recorded images of the battle with the Phoenix family. What was that? With your original specs, you should have been able to easily defeat the enemy [Queen]. Why didn’t you use your Fallen Angel powers? You limited yourself to only thunder. If you don’t add light onto thunder and make [lightning], you can’t display your true power.”

I see. Akeno-san has the blood of a Fallen Angel too. Therefore, she can also use the power of light. That is quite effective against devil opponents. Moreover, if she adds that onto her specialty of thunder, her power would become incomparable!

“…I can do just fine even if I don’t depend on that kind of power.”

However, Akeno-san’s situation was extremely complex.

“Don’t deny yourself. What will you do if you can’t accept yourself? In the end, the only thing you can rely on is your own body, right? Denying yourself makes you weak. Accept everything about yourself, even the tough and painful things. Your weakness is your current self. Overcome it by the day of the battle. If not, you will become a mere obstruction in future battles. The [Priestess of Thunder] must become the [Priestess of Lightning].”

“……”

Akeno-san didn’t respond to Sensei’s words. However, Akeno-san also understood that she had no choice but to do it.

I believe. I believe that Akeno-san shall break through this wall!

“Next is Kiba.”

“Yes.”

“First, you must maintain Balance Breaker for a full day. If you get used to it, you’ll be able to maintain it for a full day in your actual

battle form. Your objective is to continue that and to become able to maintain that state for the length of a day. After that, you'll be able to become sufficiently strong by doing basic training like Rias. I'll teach you man-to-man how to handle sword-type Sacred Gears later."

So you ask a Sacred Gear expert about Sacred Gears. Sensei was talking about himself as an enthusiast. But what was so interesting about Sacred Gears?

"For sword training…will you train under your teacher again?"

"Yes, I plan to be taught from scratch again."

Heh, so this guy had a sword teacher. As I thought, is he strong?

Because he's so diligent, Kiba will really let himself be taught from scratch. So is this guy going to become stronger again?

"Next, Xenovia. To be able to use Durandal better than you do now…you need to be able to use another holy sword."

"Another holy sword?"

Xenovia looked doubtful towards Sensei's words.

"Yeah, a slightly special sword."

Sensei grinned, but he soon stopped smiling and turned to look at Gasper.

"Next is Gasper."

"Y-Yeeeeeeees!"

This hikikomori-kun was a bit nervous…He came to this place after a long time of social withdrawal, after all. There were a lot of people coming and going.

"Don't be so frightened. Your biggest obstacle is that fear. You need to train your mind and body that fears everything from scratch. From the start, the specs with your bloodline and your Sacred Gear

are substantial. Skill improvement of your bishop special characteristics and your magic will also support you greatly. Since I've constructed an exclusive [hikikomori escape plan] program, you must first put on a proper attitude as much as possible. Even if going out in public entirely is impossible for you, make sure that your movements aren't dull."

So said Sensei. Exactly, this guy can't do anything if he doesn't become strong in mind and body first. The ring that stabilises Sacred Gears doesn't seem to be good for the body if used too often, so it's been removed except for special times. For the time being, he also didn't seem to be running out of control. I was still worried, though.

"Yeeeeeeeeeeees! I'll try to obtain a spirit that goes for broke!"

…Please don't say something that makes me feel uneasy like that, Gasper. When you say that, it seems like you'll really go for broke. Ah, look, you're immediately trying to go back into your cardboard box…

"The same [Bishop]-class, Asia."

"Y-Yes!"

Asia was also showing fighting spirit as well. She had confessed before that she felt that she was usually not very useful to everyone.

That wasn't true. Asia's recovery ability was outstanding. If Asia wasn't here, there would have been a lot of dangerous situations. I think that she should have confidence in herself.

"You will also improve your body and magic with basic training. Also, your main task will be to strengthen your Sacred Gear."

"Isn't Asia's recovery Sacred Gear already the best? She can heal everything besides sickness and stamina just by touching."

That was my opinion. Could her recovery ability be improved any further? Her recovery speed was already considerable. She could heal even a fatal injury.

“I understand that. The speed of her recovery ability is great. However, the problem is the “touching” part. She can’t heal if she doesn’t expressly go into close range if an ally is injured.”

Ah, somehow, I might have understood what Azazel-sensei said.

“Could Asia’s Sacred Gear expand its range?”

Buchou’s words were exactly what I wanted to ask. Sensei affirmed it.

“That’s correct, Rias. This is like an underhanded trick, but to show the true worth of [Twilight Healing], its effective range must be expanded.”

“So it’s also possible for Asia’s Sacred Gear to be used in long-range as well!?”

Sensei nodded at my question. Isn’t that an incredible thing?

“According to the theory based on the data gathered by our organisation. It should also be possible for the Sacred Gear aura to be issued from the whole body and to use the recovery on all allies within one’s surroundings.”

Seriously!? If that’s really true, Asia’s role on the battlefield will become something unthinkable! The labor of healing people one by one can be eliminated and the time reduced as well! Many chances for a counterattack would be born!

However, just how big is the database of the Fallen Angels? Does it really have data on all powers concerning Sacred Gears?

“But, the problem is that it would seem to heal both enemies and allies without discernment. It would be fine if it could distinguish between enemies and allies and heal only allies, but…I’m worried about Asia’s own nature.”

“Asia’s…what are you worried about?”

Sensei answered my question with a serious look.

“She’s a [kind] person. When seeing an injured enemy on the battlefield, Asia would think in her heart of wanting to heal him too. That would obstruct the Sacred Gear’s ability to distinguish between enemies and allies. Most likely, Asia wouldn’t be able to obtain this distinguishing power. This enlarged healing range that I spoke of just now can be a double-edged sword for this team. Even so, you should keep the range expansion in mind.”

So if used poorly, Asia’s range expansion will also heal the damage of the enemy. To think that the cause of that would be Asia’s kindness…The Sacred Gear system is too ironic…

“That’s why I’ve found another possibility. —The power to fire the healing aura.”

“S-So you mean I would send my healing power to someone that is some distance away from me?”

Asia made the gesture of throwing something. I was healed just by that cute gesture.

“Yes, it seems that you can directly throw it. When Ise is battling 10 meters away and is injured, you would fire your healing power at Ise. If what you have used until now is a standard limited field, the one I’m explaining now is a projectile version. You could heal even if you aren’t directly touching.”

The healing power as a projectile! Hey, hey, hey, that’s unthinkable!

“T-That’s amazing! Asia can play a great active role like that!”

I took Asia’s hands and held them up spiritedly. Though Asia was surprised at this unexpected information, she was also in a happy state.

“Its power would be a little less than with direct touch, but being able to heal allies from far away is still a strategic characteristic with many uses. With one or two people jumping into the front lines and arranging for the healing Asia and someone to guard her in the back, you’d be able to make the ideal formation.”

So, Sensei even went as far as to imagine the formation. He really does like thinking to such a large degree, huh?

Buchou agreed with Sensei's opinion.

"It's an easy method, but that's why strong tactical formations are simple. Usually, the method used to heal allies is Phoenix tears or some mixed healing medicine. Asia's Sacred Gear could easily top those with its all-purpose characteristic and reliability."

"That's right. The power of Asia's Sacred Gear, which can also heal devils, could be called this team's distinctive characteristic and weapon. After that is merely a test of Asia's strength. Please finish the basic training properly, okay?"

"Y-Yes! I'll do my best!'

Do your best, Asia! If it comes to it, I'll act as Asia's shield, after all. I'll absolutely protect her! I can't let Asia, who is like a cute younger-sister to me, have her beautiful-looking skin damaged!

"Next is Koneko."

"…Yes."

Koneko-chan was—in considerable fighting spirit. I wonder what that was about. Even though she had seemed unwell here until recently, she was strangely excited today. What was Koneko-chan thinking about?

"You have nothing to be criticised about, as you possess the elementary traits of offence and defence as a [Rook]. Your physical ability is also not a problem. However, there are those better at offence in Rias' group than a [Rook] like you."

"…I know that."

Koneko-chan wore a frustrated-looking face in response to Sensei's clearly spoken words.

…Could it be, Koneko-chan? Was that what you were worrying about? No, but, isn't Koneko-chan already stronger than the plain

me and better than Kiba or Akeno-san in terms of pure strength?

“The ones at the top of offence in Rias’ group are currently Kiba and Xenovia. It’s because they possess brutal weapons with his Balance Breaker holy demonic swords and her holy sword Durandal. And with Ise who plans to enter Balance Breaker here—”

Offence—. Certainly, Kiba and Xenovia’s power in this were excellent.

Though, I don’t know whether I’ll be able to succeed in attaining Balance Breaker.

“Koneko, you will also improve your basics like the others. In addition, release the thing that you have personally sealed. It’s the same as with Akeno. If you don’t accept yourself, big growth won’t be possible for you.”

“……”

Koneko-chan said nothing in response to Sensei’s words. Her fighting spirit from before had suddenly disappeared at the mention of “releasing”.

…What was Koneko-chan’s power? What problem did she have?

“Don’t worry, if it’s Koneko-chan, you can become strong in a flash.”

I spoke casually and tried to pat Koneko-chan’s head, but my hand was brushed away.

“…Please don’t say that so lightly…”

—A stern expression. This was my first time seeing such a stern-feeling from Koneko-chan.

Did I step on a land mine? What should I do, the encouragement I tried to give had the opposite effect…

While the atmosphere became somewhat gloomy, Sensei worriedly looked at his watch.

“Now then, the last is Ise. For you…Please wait a moment. Should be here soon…”

Sensei looked up at the sky. Huh? What was I supposed to be waiting for? Rather, what was coming?

I and the others also looked up at the sky. What was it? There was nothing there—.

As I was feeling doubtful, a huge shadow appeared in the sky within my vision! It was heading towards us at extreme speed! Uwah! Huge! A monster!? Demon!? Ghost!? It couldn’t be an enemy attack, could it!?

Dooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooon!

The earth shook as it landed right in front of us! Even sitting down in a chair the ground shook greatly, and I fell to the ground!

A cloud of dust danced in the air, and after it settled, a huge monster appeared before us!

It was fifteen meters tall! A monster! It’s a monster! A mouth that split hugely! Brutal-looking fangs that had all grown out from its mouth! Thick arms and thick legs! Two wings spread out on its sides!

…I knew what this was. I had seen it several times and there was also one lodged inside me.

“—A dragon!”

“That’s right, Ise. This is a dragon.”

Sensei nodded. So it really is a dragon! It’s huuuuuuuuuge! A monster! When it blew out, it would let out fire! It’s definite that all the surrounding vicinity would be burned!

“Azazel, you have some nerve openly entering devil territory.”

The enormous dragon raised the edge of its mouth and spoke. Ooh, it talks!

“Hah, I’ve properly gotten the personal permission of the Maou-sama and have entered this territory fairly, you know? Do you have a complaint, Tannin?”

Sensei seemed to know this dragon.

“Hmph. Well, it’s fine. I specially came here because of Sirzechs’ request. Don’t forget your surroundings, Fallen Angel Governor.”

“Heheh. —Anyway, Ise. This guy is your teacher.”

……Sensei said that to me as he pointed his finger at the enormous dragon.

By no means. My teacher? ……Eh? Eeeh!?

“Eeee

when they were the “Six Great Dragon Kings”. The dragon called Tannin recorded in the Bible is him.]

Hah, a Dragon King. Certainly, there are also Dragon Kings aiming at me. Scary, scary. A huge dragon like this is aiming at me? No, no. I absolutely do not want to meet them! Just Vali is enough for me as a dragon opponent! Won’t I die before I become a harem king!?

“Tannin became a devil, so the [Six Great Dragon Kings] became the [Five Great Dragon Kings]. Even among the current reincarnated devils, he is ultimate-class. A highest grade devil.”

So, said Azazel-sensei. Then, this dragon is a devil! Reincarnated from a dragon! Heh, so a devil reincarnated from a dragon, and what’s more a Dragon King, also entered the industry. To be called a highest-grade devil, he must be even greater than Buchou.

Seeing him before me, I actually felt it. Even a reincarnated devil can aim for the top!

“[Blaze Meteor Dragon] Tannin. It’s even said that his breath of fire is equal to the impact of a meteorite. He’s one of the few legendary dragons that are still active right now. Sorry, Tannin, but please help with the training of this kid who carries the Red Dragon Emperor. I want you to teach him how to use a dragon’s power from scratch.”

Azazel earnestly asked Tannin this. Wait, so I’m going to learn how to use my power from this dragon that possesses meteor-level power!? Is that okay? Won’t I die?

“Even if I don’t do it, it should be fine if Ddraig teaches him directly, right?”

“Even so, there is a limit to it. He really needs true dragon training.”

“The original actual combat form. I see, so you’re saying that you want me to torment this boy.”

Tannin continued after Sensei’s words like that! Hey, hey! I’m going

to be tormented!? If I'm tormented by such a monster, I'll immediately die!

"This is my first time training someone who harbours Ddraig."

The dragon said that happily while narrowing his eyes with a smile! …I-I'm going to be killed! If I'm trained by such a monster, there's no way I'll be able to endure it! Fundamentally, I'm a human at my base! It's impossible, impossible!

[Please control yourself, Tannin. My host is weaker than you imagine.]

Ooh, Ddraig! As expected of my partner!

"It's fine as long as he doesn't die, right? Leave it to me."

I'm going to die! I'm going to be killed! He doesn't seem to understand, this dragon Ossan[11]!

Beside me, Sensei was nodding in agreement for some reason! Please don't agree! It's impossible!

"The period is about 20 days in human world time. I'd like for him to reach Balance Breaker by then. Ise, work as hard as you can without dying."

After leaving me those words, Sensei waved his hand and started to leave! Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeh!? You're finished with just that!?

"Now then, each of us will now do our respective training menus. I hope you all do well."

Buchou left me behind and continued the conversation!

[Yes.]

Everyone also responded and started to disperse from this place! Huh!? Huh!? I'm training with this dragon just like that!? No one else thinks that there's a problem here!? No matter how you look at it, I'm going to be attacked by this dragon, you know!? I'll die, you know!?

“Ise, do your best!”

Buchou gave me a thumbs-up and sent me a cheer! That’s right. Buchou is the kind of person who doesn’t allow compromise when it comes to training. Usually, she’s lenient and kind to me, but whenever this sort of training starts, she gives me demonic and gruelling training!

“Miss Rias. Can you lend me the mountain there? I’ll be bringing him over there.”

The dragon Ossan pointed to the far-off mountain from before.

“Sure. Please teach him well.”

“Leave it to me. I’ll train him right to the edge of death.”

Huh!? This was the conclusion of negotiations!? Seriously!? So that far-off mountain will be my grave!?

The dragon grabbed me with his hand and started to fly! Uwaaaaah! He’s flying! I’ve been captured by a dragon! I’ll be eaten!

“Buchooooooooooooooooooooou!”

Even as I cried and begged for help, Buchou just waved her hand with a smiling face from below me!

Dear grandfather in heaven.

For some reason, I have been captured by a dragon and am flying in the sky.

The summer of my second-year—.

The page of my important springtime of youth—.

I was enjoying it on a mountain with a dragon.

This place really is hell. The heaven where my grandfather is feels quite far away.

Part 6

The summer vacation that I longed for.

Me, Matsuda and Motohama had promised at the beginning of the year that we would find girls and have an ero-ero summer vacation this year, but…For some reason, I was instead being shot at by a monster on a mountain in hell.

Dogooooooooooooon!

Nearby, trees went flying, rocks crumbled and a crater was created in the ground!

“Uwaaaaaaaaaah!

I desperately avoided the breath of fire from the monster—the dragon Ossan!

Tears still came out of my eyes even though I thought that they had dried out, you know? Because I was facing such a scary feeling every single day, my tears couldn’t dry out! No, enough already! This kind of life! Where is there a high school student that gets shot at by a dragon every day!?

“Come on, Sekiryuutei kid. If you don’t dodge quicker, you’ll become charcoal.”

No! I don’t want to become charcoal before I have sex with Buchou! I have to do it with the virgin Buchou! My plan was to throw away my virginity by having sex with Buchou!

I also wanted to have sex with Akeno-san! I wanted the virgin Akeno-san too! I also wanted to make children with Xenovia! And I also wanted to get along with Asia more!

—Why am I on this mountain while on the verge of death!?

Several days had passed since I came to this mountain and I was completely worn out.

My fatigue was at its peak in both mind and body. Because I was being chased around every day and night by a monster, you know? Even every once in a while, when I launched a counterattack, I could never turn the tables. Even if I punched the scales of such a tough dragon, not only did it do no damage, it conversely hurt my fist instead.

Even using my transfer power was insignificant, so I could only spent my time running away and hiding every single day. That guy was mercilessly trying to kill me!

Moreover, that fire breath attack…It had blown off a section of the mountain with a single breath. If I get hit directly by that kind of attack, I'll die from a single hit!

Since my power has risen, my left arm has essentially become a dragon arm, since I gave it as payment to the Sacred Gear in the battle with Raiser, but thanks to putting a ring I got from Sensei on my wrist, my arm wouldn't transform. Sensei really makes lots of things.

But the time we are in hell is limited. When we return to the human world, my finger will be sucked by Buchou and Akeno-san again!

However, even just running has given me considerable training. At present, I hadn't even received a single hit from that breath…but my jersey was in tatters. It was full of holes.

Once the gruelling training during the first part of everyday ended, basic training began. It was mainly muscle training. When that was done, I was always in immense pain as my entire body screamed, but it felt better than being chased around by the dragon Ossan, and I could surprisingly perform it normally.

I had no choice but to secure my own meals. Rather, as I was ignorant of the animals and plants of the Underworld, I caught fish in the river only after confirming whether it was edible or not from the dragon Ossan, and I gathered nuts from trees that grew on the mountain.

I got fire by creating it somehow with my unskillful magic. Fufufu,

I've only improved my fire-making magic, you know?

…Huh? Why was I a living such a life? When I caught a fish, I unconsciously said "Tottado!"[12]. This is bad. Aren't I steadily becoming a wild child?

I've been spending everyday here doing this and that. I wanted to meet with Buchou! I wanted to talk to Asia! I wanted to have tea from Akeno-san!

Uu, there weren't any girls here! It's a true hell for me! I longed for Buchou's lap pillow! I wanted to savour the feeling of Buchou's thighs again!

Delusions were the only pleasures that came to me here.

When Ossan's harsh training ended, I went to the world of delusions. Buchou and Asia were there, and they welcomed me warmly…

Recently, I even became able to enter delusions while being chased around by the dragon Ossan. Even I thought that I was ill.

Dooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooh!

Another fire ball was shot! Uwaaaaaaaah! The rock I was hiding behind was destroyed, and I was found by Ossan.

"Here you are, here you are. It's no use even if you become good at just running away. Come on, fight back."

"It's impossible! You're too strong! Could you, be even stronger than Vali!?"

"Well, I have often been said to be Maou-class in terms of pure power."

See! You're a monster! What's with the Maou-class talk!? Why am I trying to survive on a mountain with a Maou-class dragon!?

Damn it! If it's like this, I should have gone to the sea with Matsuda and Motohama!

I want women! Even though I had only beautiful girls and beautiful women around me, there wasn't a single flag being raised![13]

Aah, it was the best when Buchou and Akeno-san became those girls. I had confessed once with the resolution of a dying man. But they seemed to say "sorry" at that instant…

Even I was surprised at myself that my horny nature wouldn't stop having delusions while I was being chased by Ossan. But I wouldn't be able to survive in these conditions if I didn't have delusions!

"Oh, you're doing it. How is it going?"

I heard a voice that was familiar. Looking behind me, the Fallen Angel Governor was there.

"So good! So gooooooooooood!"

While crying, I was eating rice balls made by Buchou that Azazel-sensei had brought.

So good! It was Buchou's flavour! It had Buchou's love in it! Since I also had a boxed lunch made by Asia, it was the best!

"There's also a boxed lunch made by Akeno. Eat that too. Since she made it while causing a show of sparks with Rias. But, hahahaha, you've gotten a bit of a good face in the several days that I haven't seen you."

Sensei said that while patting my shoulder.

"Don't joke around! I almost died! I really almost died! This dragon Ossan is insanely strong! Even if you told him to teach me the battle of a dragon, when he uses too much of his real power, it's just absuuuuuuuuuurd!"

I cried out while rice flew from my mouth! Because it's harsh! A modern-day kid like me can't endure it, coming to an empty mountain for several days with a Maou-class dragon! Worst of all, Buchou's breasts weren't here!

“Tannin-ossan doesn’t know how to hold back! I’m going to be killed! I don’t want to die while still a virgin!”

“You idiot. You’ve decided not to die, right? If I was so inclined, you would become charcoal by my breath of fire. If you don’t want to have these painful feelings, then reach Balance Breaker quickly.”

Ossan said that to me with half-opened eyes while resting on a rock face.

“Even if you say that! If someone with a human base like me takes a punch from someone monster-sized like you, I’ll be turned into itty-bitty pieces with one blow!”

“Hmph. How foolish, when you call yourself Miss Rias’ strongest [Pawn] in that kind of condition. Do you know how many devils would want to be Miss Rias’ servant?”

…Now that you mention it, Buchou is a celebrity in the underworld. Even when she just briefly appeared in that city station before, high-pitched cheers had risen out for her.

Now that I thought about it, there were many devils who wished to become Buchou's servants. Does that make me lucky?

Yeah, I really am the luckiest, because I can live with such a beautiful and kind Onee-sama with big breasts.

Ah, Buchou. The person I yearned for. I'd like to marry her one day…Well, it's a distant and empty dream.

I sighed. Azazel-sensei spoke while looking at the training diary that I kept.

“Even so, you’ve also been including basic training, right? Then, it’s fine. If you don’t do this much, your body won’t be able to keep up when you attain Balance Breaker. There is too much that you are lacking in. You wouldn’t be able to win against Vali with magic even if he was doing a headstand. Therefore, you have no choice but to raise yourself up through physical strength.”

I understood that, it was exactly as Sensei said. Vali is a descendant of the Old Maou. In terms of magic, I absolutely cannot win. But even so, how could I win with physical strength…? There was a big of gap between me and Vali in terms of basic specs.

“Umm, back then, Vali was trying to do something, but what was it?”

I asked Azazel-sensei this. Before Vali left, he tried to do something. Though Albion also tried to restrain him from doing it…

“Ah, that was the [Juggernaut Drive].”

“Is it something above even the Balance Breaker?”

“No, there exists nothing above Balance Breaker. The ultimate and final form of Sacred Gears is the Balance Breaker. However, there are several things inside Sacred Gear that have a magical being sealed in them. A peculiar restraint is applied on those ones. Your Boosted Gear and Vali’s Divine Dividing are examples of that.”

I see. Mine and his Sacred Gear are the type whose power comes from having a magical being—in other words, a dragon sealed inside it.

“Those ones are strongly restrained, taking out power while in that state and making sure that the host can use it. In the case of the Sacred Gears of the Sekiryuutei and the Hakuryuukou, forcing that restraint to temporarily release and unleashing the sealed power is the [Juggernaut Drive]. It temporarily gives one power rivalling that of God, but the risk is also huge. It greatly shaves off one’s

lifespan. And it also makes one lose their sense of reason."

"You mean you run out of control?"

"Yeah, to a violent degree. One would destroy all of their surroundings, and even start to destroy oneself before finally stopping. It's impossible to master that power in actual combat, but…Vali can handle it for several minutes by consuming an enormous amount of magic power—he should be able to do so, anyway. Since Albion was impatient back then, I guess that it still has its dangers. Naturally, it's not my place to say this as one who uses an artificial Sacred Gear in a Burst state, but the way to use a power that throws away one's future like that is essentially different from the way to use the Sacred Gear's power. —It's an accursed method of fighting that just uses the power of people that are transformed into the dead. You should absolutely never copy it."

There was sorrow in sensei's eyes. Was he worried about Vali? He had talked about teaching him how to use his power when he was still his subordinate.

"So the current Hakuryuukou can handle the [Juggernaut Drive]? That's a problem. The Sekiryuutei kid would be killed if he didn't become desperate. The way either the white or red awakened that power before certainly let them surpass the other. In some sense, it's first come, first served."

Tannin-ossan said such a shocking thing! Seriously!?

Then, it's my turn to die!? …No, I can't die yet. I still have a dream to fulfil! My harem! My high-class devil promotion! If it's like this, I'll even aim at being an ultimate-class devil like Ossan! It's huge that I've found out that it's possible even for a reincarnated devil!

…But, can I endure Ossan's harsh training?

Ossan is too strong. I can't win. He's a monster. That breath of fire is foul play. Since I'm not some huge and special hero who can shoot beams from my hands, such an opponent is impossible for me.

"Ise, let's change the topic."

Sensei called out to me, who hadn't looked at him since before, with a suddenly formal tone.

"Yes?"

"How do you think of Akeno?"

That's sudden. What was this about?

"I think that she's a good Senpai."

I immediately spoke my honest feelings. Her S-mode is a bit scary, but she's usually very gentle and the girlish part of her that she sometimes shows is really cute.

"That's not what I meant. I mean as a woman."

"She's attractive! She's one of the people that I want to be with!"

Sensei nodded at my question with a "Uh-huh" while seeming somehow relieved.

"I see. You see, I also have to watch over her in the place of a friend of mine."

"You mean Akeno-san's father, who's one of your subordinates, right?"

"Rather than a subordinate, Barakiel is a comrade from ancient times like Shemhaza. A friend, a friend. We did a lot of stupid things together. So, before I realised it, everyone around me besides myself had gotten wives and kids."

Sensei sighed deeply. Ah, this person, is he the type to worry about being single?

"You were beaten to the punch, huh?"

"…It's fine, since I have so many women for me."

Ah, he got a faraway look in his eyes for an instant there. Is the subject of marriage taboo for him as I thought?

“Well, leaving that aside, I’m very concerned about Akeno. Though, to Barakiel and Akeno, it may be none of my business.”

“Sensei, you’re unexpectedly a heated, or perhaps I should say meddlesome person. You also involved yourself in our training.”

“I’m just an ordinary Fallen Angel with free time. —Though, it was because of that that I also raised the Hakuryuukou.”

That’s not true. I think that he’s just a nosy person. With me, with Akeno, and with Vali. He has poked his nose into each of our business. What a strange Fallen Angel. With him as the Governor, I can’t understand the whole aspects of his organisation.

“In any case, I’m thinking of perhaps entrusting Akeno to you.”

“Entrusting her…to me?”

What do you mean, entrusting? Do you mean protecting her with my body during games and battles? In that case, protecting her is no problem for me. I think it’s also the role of the [Pawn] to protect the [Queen] Akeno-san with one’s body.

“You’re an idiot, but you’re not a bad guy. Rather, it would be better to call you a loveable idiot. Above all, you don’t seem to have discrimination towards her.”

“? I don’t seem to get what you’re talking about…”

“Hahahaha, that’s why I’m relieved. If you were really deceiving her, things would have already descended into carnage. If you do it poorly, it will have an effect on things from now on and you’ll also see blood. The type like you that takes form from winning the trust of those around you can feel at ease without resenting anyone. In some sense that’s a privilege, or rather a talent.” **(!)**

“??????”

My brain was full of question marks. I didn’t understand it very well, but—.

“I understand. I’ll protect Akeno-san! Of course, I’ll also help my

master, Buchou, and protect Asia too!”

“Alright. Well, I’ll entrust the matter of Akeno to you. More importantly—the problem is Koneko.”

“? What’s wrong with Koneko-chan?”

Sensei let out a breath at my question.

“There’s nothing that can be done about it. She’s impatient—or rather, she feels doubt in her power.”

I suddenly remembered how Koneko-chan didn’t seem to be feeling well recently. Was something the matter with her?

“She overdid the training that I gave her. This morning, she collapsed.”

“C-Collapseeeeeeeeed!?”

I was shocked at this bad news about my Kouhai. Seriously!? Was Koneko-chan all right?

“Asia can treat injuries, but she can’t do anything about physical strength. Overworking in particular certainly hurts one’s physical strength and has adverse effects. Because the time left until the game is limited, that’s dangerous.”

“U-Umm, if overworking is no good, what about me…? Aren’t I close to death by being chased around by a dragon monster every day…?”

I asked this while pointing at myself. No matter how you think about it, it’s inhumane!

“Ah, it’s fine for you. Something of this extent isn’t enough for that.”

You said so readily! Is that so!? How is it fine for me!? It was just too much to handle, and my tears wouldn’t stop!

“Now then, we should go. Ise, I was told to take you back just this

once. You'll return to the Gremory annex only once. Tannin, he'll be going back for a little while. I'll return him tomorrow morning."

"Yeah, then I'll return to my territory for now."

So said sensei and Tannin-ossan.

Eh? I can temporarily come down from the mountain?

"Heh? Sensei, from whom did the order for me to return come from? Buchou?"

"—from her mother."

Buchou's mother…What business does she have with me?

Part 7

“Yes, turn there. That’s no good. The sharpness isn’t good. Come on, Issei-san, do it from the beginning without acting stupefied.”

I was in the annex that was detached from the Gremory main residence. I was making an effort in dancing practice with Buchou’s mother in a room there.

…Why was I doing this kind of thing?

As soon as I returned to the annex, I was led here by Buchou’s mother. Then, we started dancing practice just like that. Because I had never done something like this before, I was completely no good at it.

Buchou’s mother was wearing a dress as usual. I was having a dance lesson while being glued to Buchou’s mother! I sometimes came into contact with her breasts. They were wonderfully soft! How to say it, it had a matured feeling in elasticity and texture! I don’t understand it that well, but that’s how it felt! And her appearance was the same as Buchou’s! Was this the charm of a married woman?

However, this mother. she’s seriously pretty. Because she looked about the same age as me, I was conscious of her! Moreover, she had the same face as Buchou who I yearned for, you know? She was a flaxen-haired version of Buchou! F-Furthermore, her style was also exceptional just like Buchou! Her breasts were big! Buchou’s breasts were hereditary. Thank you very much, mother! Your breasts' genes were safely handed down to Buchou!

“Shall we take a short break?”

And so having been given permission, I sat down right where I was with long, drawn out breaths.

Ah, I had been chased around by a dragon since this morning. My stamina was…well, this is still far better than having fire shot at me by that monster Ossan.

…But still. I asked a question to Buchou's mother.

"U-Umm."

"What is it?"

"Why am I the only one doing this? And not Kiba or Gasper?"

Yes, why only me? Including the customary Gremory education as well, if it was to train me as a gentleman, even Kiba and Gasper should be…Though, I understood that I was the least like a gentleman.

Buchou's mother answered me.

"Kiba Yuuto-san has already mastered these sorts of techniques. As expected of a [Knight]. Gasper-san is a member of a distinguished vampire family. He may behave unreliably, but he at least knows etiquette. The problem is Issei-san. It can't be helped that you're a commoner from the human world, but even so it's troubling if you don't acquire etiquette beyond a certain level. Because you'll also have to make an appearance with Rias in high society eventually. You have to remember customary practices even a little during your stay in the Underworld."

I was dumbfounded by the words of Buchou's mother! Me in high society!? But didn't I hear that servants couldn't show their faces to such an extent?

"B-Buchou…Rias-sama and me will be in high society together!?"

As I was surprised, Buchou's mother shifted her gaze to the side and covered her mouth with her hand.

"…Oops, I carelessly let something slip out. That kind of thing is still talk of what may happen. Leaving that aside, calling her [Buchou] like that will not do. This isn't school, so you have to properly call your master by her name. Not to mention, Rias is… Oops, I nearly let something slip again."

Eh? Calling her Buchou is no good?

“Even if you suddenly say such a thing, since I’ve always kept calling her Buchou…Hmm, how about Rias-sama then?”

“Yes, like that. Or you can call her [master]. —Though, you have to call her differently in private as well.”

“So [Buchou] is no good?”

“Think. If you had to give an answer on that within yourself, do you hate that girl?”

Buchou’s mother said that while giving a wry smile.

No, no! There’s no way I could hate Buchou!

“Well, it would be difficult for you to call her that all of a sudden, and Rias would also be bewildered if you did that suddenly. For this home visit only, you may call her [Buchou]. However, you have to be certain of what to call her eventually.”

Now that she brings it up, what was the person in question, Buchou, doing right now?

She might be in dire distress with poor physical health like Koneko-chan. Hmm, I’m also a bit worried. I’d like to go see how she is at least once as her important Kouhai, but…If I go, that may seem like an overuse of my feelings with that…

“U-Umm, can I ask you one question?”

“What is it?”

“What about Koneko-chan…? Is Koneko-chan okay?”

“Yes. It was just ordinary overworking, so she should recover slowly if she rests her body for one or two days.”

“…I’m very worried about Koneko-chan, since she’s been acting strangely since before we came here.”

“That girl is doing her best to face her own existence and power right now. It’s a difficult problem. However, she won’t be able to

advance forward if she doesn't find the answer herself."

"…Her existence and power?"

I was full of questions. What was in Koneko-chan?

"…Now that I think of it, you haven't been part of Rias' group for long. Yes, it's natural that you don't know. I'll tell you a little."

Buchou's mother sat down while facing me, and began to tell a certain story.

It was a story of two cat sisters.

The cat sisters were always together, when they played, when they ate, when they slept. With their parents dead, they had no home to return to and no one to rely on. The two cats struggled to live day to day while depending on each other.

"One day, the two of them were picked up by a certain devil. The older sister became a part of his group, and so the younger sister was also able to live with them. Having finally obtained a decent life, the two of them believed that they could pass time very happily."

However, something unusual happened. It appeared that the elder cat sister achieved rapid growth after gaining power. Buchou's mother said that her hidden talent suddenly began to overflow by becoming a reincarnated devil.

"That cat was of a species that naturally excels in youjutsu[14]. Furthermore, she bloomed in magic talent as well, and even invoked senjutsu that was said only the last of the sennin[15] could use."

It seemed that the elder cat sister, having surpassed her master in a short time, was swallowed by power and was transformed into a wicked existence that only sought blood and battle.

"With her increase in power not stopping, the elder cat sister killed the devil that was her master in the end, and degenerated into an "exiled devil". Moreover, she changed into one of the most

dangerous among the “exiled devils”. One that completely annihilated all the pursuit squads…”

It was said that the devils temporarily canceled all pursuit of the elder cat sister.

“The younger cat sister remained behind. The devils questioned her as a liability there.”

[This cat may also eventually run out of control. It’s better to deal with her now.] —So they said.

“It was Sirzechs who saved that cat that was planned to be disposed of. Sirzechs persuaded the high-class devils that the younger cat sister was innocent. As a result, the situation was settled by having Sirzechs watch over her.”

However, having been betrayed by her elder sister, that she believed in and tortured by the other devils, the little cat sister’s spirit appeared to be on the brink of collapse…What a sad story…

“Sirzechs left the younger cat sister that had lost her smile and the will to live in the care of Rias. After the younger cat sister met Rias, she recovered her emotions little by little. And then, Rias gave that cat a name. —Koneko.”

—.

I was at a loss for words after hearing this much. So, the story just now was Koneko-chan’s…?

Wait, then, Koneko-chan’s true form is—.

“She was originally a Youkai[16]. You know of the Nekomata[17], right? Cat Youkai. She is a survivor of the strongest species among the cat Youkai, a Nekoshou[18]. They are a high-level youkai species who can not only master youjutsu, but senjutsu as well.”

Part 8

“Ah, Buchou.”

“Ise!”

Having moved to the main residence after the completion of my dancing practice, I was welcomed by Buchou—Owaaah! I was hugged all of a sudden! Buchou was tightly hugging me. Ah, it’s been a while since I’ve had this feeling…Though only a few days have passed, I missed Buchou’s smell!

“…Ise’s smell.”

“Ah, umm, I’ve been sweating a lot…”

“It’s fine. Your smell is still the same. —I was lonely, you know?”

When you say that with such moist eyes, my heart can't help but skip a beat!

“I haven’t been able to sleep with you since arriving here, and I wasn’t able to feel you like this every day either…Since, I can no longer imagine a life without you…What a pitiful master I am.”

Aaaaah, Buchou! Has your level of dependence on me risen? I’m more blessed than I deserve as your servant! I also can’t imagine a life without Buchou either! That’s why the training on that mountain was so, so tough! I tried to say that, but—.

“However, a little endurance is needed. First, we have to both be strong. Ise, do your best in your mountain seclusion with Tannin! Blow away his breath of fire!”

“—! Uuu, y-yeeeeees! I’ll do my best not to become cindeeeeers!”

As I thought, Buchou doesn’t compromise when it comes to training! I replied with tears in my eyes! I understaaaaaaaaaaaand! If Buchou says so, I’ll do my best with the resolve to diiiiiiiiiiie!

But, leaving that aside, I shook my head again and asked Buchou a question.

“U-Umm, Buchou. How’s Koneko-chan?”

Buchou’s face became complicated at that.

“Follow me.”

The room that I entered according to Buchou was—Koneko-chan’s room.

Buchou had finished talking with her already, and Akeno-san was already inside, so only I was told to enter.

So I went to meet Koneko-chan by myself. Her room was wide. It was a wide room, when I turned my feet towards the bedroom—.

Akeno-san was standing by the bed, and Koneko-chan was lying down on that bed.

—.

I was surprised to see what had sprung up on Koneko-chan’s head.

Cat ears! So she really was a cat Youkai known as a Nekomata. But! What to do! A Koneko-chan who has cat ears! So lovely, so incredibly adorable!

Since she usually hides them, did she also lose the strength needed to hide them when she ran out of physical strength?

No, no, it isn’t the time for that now. I’ve come to see Koneko-chan’s condition.

“Ise-kun, this is—”

Because of my reaction to Koneko-chan’s cat ears, Akeno-san tried to explain the reason.

“No, I’ve already heard the general story.”

I responded with this to Akeno-san. Just like that, I move to the side of the bed and examined Koneko-chan's condition.

I didn't catch sight of any especially bad injuries. Well, if it was just injuries, it would be no problem with Asia here. So she really did come here because she exhausted all her physical strength.

"Hey, is your body okay?"

I asked that with a smile. Then, Koneko-chan muttered with half-opened eyes.

"…What did you come here for?"

A sullen tone of voice, far more than the extent up until now. She was angry that I came, huh?

"…Would it be no good if I said it was because I was worried?"

"……"

Still acting sullen, Koneko-chan didn't respond. I continued.

"Koneko-chan, I heard about it, about all the various things. In any case, overworking yourself is no good. If you don't take care of your body…though, I have no right to talk while I'm receiving hellish training."

"…I want to…"

Koneko-chan muttered something very quietly, and since I failed to hear it clearly, I asked again.

"Eh? What is it?"

Then, Koneko-chan looked straight at me and spoke in a clear tone. While holding tears in her eyes—.

“I want to become strong. Like Yuuto-senpai, Xenovia-senpai, Akeno-san…and also Ise-senpai, I want to make my spirit and body strong. Gya-kun is also becoming strong. I don’t have a healing power like Asia-senpai either…At this rate, I’ll become useless. Even though I’m a [Rook], I’m the…weakest…I hate being useless…”

“Koneko-chan…”

So you were worrying about that…Certainly, Kiba has also become

stronger. Xenovia is strong too. Akeno-san is the strongest piece, [Queen], and Gasper can stop time. Asia may be no good at fighting, but her healing ability was great, and then there was me. Even though I myself was weak, I hold a legendary dragon in my body.

Koneko-chan continued to talk even as she shed large tears.

"…But, I don't want to use the power sleeping inside me…my Nekomata power…If I use it, I…just like my Nee-sama…I don't want that…I absolutely don't want such a thing…"

For the first time—. For the first time, I saw Koneko-chan's crying face like this. Since she was a kid that hadn't directly shown much of her feelings up until now, seeing that was a shock to me.

Koneko-chan's Onee-san had her power run out of control, and killed her devil master. And then she had just left like that. Buchou's mother had said that this girl had seen all of that.

Because she knew that a dangerous power that could just kill her master was sleeping inside her too, she was afraid…But even so, when thinking of the situations in the coming future, she wanted power. This girl had carried these conflicting feelings even when coming to the Underworld…

So she overworked herself because she tried to become stronger without using the power sleeping inside her.

Koneko-chan possessed a warm heart with strong feelings for her friends. So she was vexed that she herself was useless. I think it was hard for her, not being able to repay Buchou who saved her.

I was also mortified at my lack of ability and uselessness to Buchou, and wished for power as well…

Akeno-san shook her head and spoke to me.

"Ise-kun, please leave the rest to us."

"But…"

“You’re a kind person. But, it’s also important to sometimes keep your distance just a little. Besides, you yourself have to become stronger. And I also…since I’m the same as Koneko-chan, we have to overcome this together. If one can’t accept all of oneself and can’t understand it, one can’t move forward. Koneko-chan and I understand this in our heads. But…our courage is just slightly not enough yet. Please wait just a little longer. Koneko-chan and I will definitely get through this. Definitely—”

Akeno-san also displayed hatred towards the Fallen Angel blood sleeping inside her. But, if she didn’t accept that power of light, she may not be able to play an active role in the tough games from beyond this point.

I see, the two of them are similar in that regard. Denying the power that sleeps inside them, because those two have done that…

“Yes. Akeno-san, Koneko-chan, I’ll…try to do the things only I can do.”

I bowed my head to the two of them, and then went out of the room just like that.

…We each have our respective battles. We each have our respective trainings. We each have our respective walls that we must surpass.

Alright! I’m fired up! Akeno-san! Koneko-chan! Everyone! And Buchou!

I’ll also surpass the training that only I can do!

After I slept soundly that day, I returned to the mountain the following morning.

Life 3: Cat and Dragon!

Part 1

“Oryaaaaaaah!”

[Explosion!!]

The increased power from my Sacred Gear flowed into my body, and my physical power rose instantly!

“Try dodging this!”

Tannin-ossan opened his mouth wide!

Gooooooooon! Doooooooooon!

I nimbly avoided the fire balls that he fired continuously, and put my hand out forward!

I imagined the image of a huge magic bullet! And of firing it! Dragon Shot!

Don! I shot a huge magic cluster from my left hand! It was about half the size of Ossan! It should be even more powerful than the one that blew up a mountain before! Thanks to that, my magic power was almost empty with what I shot out plus the increase! My weak point was that I could only store a small amount of magic power! The limit to how much I could raise the power was also only this much!

“Hmph! So you’ve sent out something a little decent!”

Ossan intended to take the magic bullet right in front of him without dodging!

Doooooooooooooooh!

Ossan caught it in front of him with his thick arms and then vigorously fired a breath from his mouth!

Doh! Gooooooooooooooh!

My magic bullet was sent far off into the sky over there by Ossan's single breath!

[Reset]

My increased power was reset and I was immediately seized with fatigue.

Ossan looked at both of his hands. Small sizzling fumes were rising from them. Did my magic bullet burn Ossan's hands?

"Nice shot. Compared to when I first met you, your dragon power has definitely risen. Your physical strength is also nothing to criticise. You've also gotten to the point where you can continuously play with me for a whole day as well."

Unusually, Ossan praised me.

I was breathing heavily and was gulping down from the water canteen I always keep prepared on my back. This water canteen, as well as being for hydration, was also able to slightly offset and weaken Ossan's fire breaths by increasing the power of the water through the power of my Sacred Gear. Well, I had also thought of various coping methods for it.

My appearance was also ragged. My jersey was no longer functional, with only my important parts protected, and my upper body was completely worn out and nude. Yeah. My chest had also become thick. And my unnecessary fat had also disappeared.

I had found plants and animals on the mountain, and had cooked and eaten them. I had acquired quite a lot of wild ability. I couldn't believe that I had lived like a mountain monkey during my summer vacation.

Thanks to surviving in the wild like this, I had acquired fire magic, and by combining it with my Sacred Gear's ability, I could do the fire technique directly taught to me by ossan. A huge fire power! I'll show it to you sometime!

And so, many days had passed since I made that vow in Koneko-chan's room. The battle with the Sitri family is on August 25th.

Today was August 20th. Five days remaining. Time-wise, we were in the period where we were finishing things up.

The time to gather together was also near. It was planned for there to be a day for us to gather together again and also get some rest. For the sake of recovering on that day from the fatigue gathered during our training.

Afterwards, it seemed that there would also be a party sponsored by Maou-sama before the game, and our family as well as the other young devils also seemed to be invited. In other words, there was no time left for any more training.

“You did well up till now as well. But, it’s unfortunate. It might have been possible if you had just one more day. Your training ends tomorrow, but…it’s probably impossible.”

Tannin-ossan sighed. Yeah, I understand. I wasn’t able to reach it during this period of time. I had progressed when it came to physical strength or anything else. —But, I was going to finish my training without having reached Balance Breaker.

I couldn’t—complete the target of my training.

Part 2

“Then, I’ll be going now. I’m also attending the Maou-sponsored party. Let’s meet again there, Hyoudou Issei and Ddraig.”

We're currently in front of the Gremory main residence. I had returned by riding on the back of Tannin-ossan. No, the back of a monster dragon was actually comfortable, and overwhelming! It was only a short trip through the air, but it was the best!

“Yes. Thank you, Ossan! See you at the party!”

[Sorry for troubling you, Tannin. We’ll meet again.]

“Yeah, I also had fun. Since I got to work together with that Ddraig. I’ve lived a long life. That’s right; do you want to enter the party by riding on my back?”

“Really? Is that okay?”

“Yeah, it’s no problem. I’ll take my group and come here on the day of the party. I’ll contact the Gremorys later for more information.”

Really, Ossan truly is a sensible dragon!

“Then, I’ll come here again tomorrow. Farewell!”

After saying just that, Ossan flapped his wings and disappeared off into the sky.

I saw him off while waving my hand.

[What an easy-going Dragon King.]

“I think he’s a good person. When we first met, he was scary, but… he’s cool for a dragon!”

[Me and you are also dragons, you know?]

That’s true, but…I think that a genuine dragon is really large and

magnificent. Me and you, we're just a possessed devil that was originally human and a part of a Sacred Gear.

[Well, that's true.]

Right? As I thought, that's "the dragon"!

"Hey, Ise-kun."

When I turned around towards the familiar male voice—Kiba was there. He was dressed in his jersey, but it was all tattered. So I wasn't the only one.

His good-looking face also looked quite tightened now.

"…You've gotten a good body."

Kiba said that while looking at my naked upper body. I covered myself!

"S-Stop it, what's with those eyes…Don't look at my body with those eyes!"

Somehow, I felt danger to my body! Because, he was scary sometimes, this guy!

"H-How cruel. I just wanted to say that you built up your muscles nicely."

"You…haven't changed."

"Well, because I have the body-type that has difficulty in putting on flesh. I'm jealous."

"Oh, Ise and Kiba."

This time it was a girl's voice. —It was Xenovia. Wait, she had bandages all over!? With her whole body covered in bandages, Xenovia's appearance was also ragged.

"But, y-you, what's with that appearance…?"

When I timidly asked that, Xenovia looked over her appearance

again and spoke.

“Yeah. I became like this because I trained, got injured and bandaged myself, and then trained, got injured and bandaged myself again.”

“You’re like a real mummy woman!”

“How rude. I have no intention of being preserved forever, you know?”

“That’s not what I meant!”

Geez, she’s incomprehensible as usual. But, I felt that the aura around her body was quieter and thicker than before. Speaking of which, Kiba’s aura was also denser.

Huh? My ability to see the flow of magic power had also improved from before? Was this also a result of training with Ossan? Did my sense become sharper from becoming one with the nature of the Underworld?

“Ise-san! Kiba-san, and Xenovia-san too!”

Coming out from the castle gate was—Asia in her nun clothes. Ah, it really is Asia!

“Asia, it’s been a while.”

“I-Ise-san! P-Please get dressed!”

Asia panicked at seeing my nudeness. She seemed to mean that, because she was embarrassed at my conduct rather than embarrassed at my nudeness, I should put something on. What’s with this girl, she was used to seeing me naked.

“Ara, it seems everyone from the group that went out has returned.”

The next to appear was—Buchou! It’s been so looooooooooong! My Buchou! My onee-sama! She’s still just as beautiful as always!

“Buchooooooooou! I wanted to see you!”

“Ise…You’ve become very robust, haven’t you? Your chest is thicker.”

She embraced me tightly while saying that. Ah, the feeling of Buchou…Rather, because my lust itself was suppressed during that mountain seclusion, the level of my arousal was intense from smelling the scent of the woman I missed so much…As I thought, women are nice.

“Now then, everyone. Please come in. Once you’ve taken a shower and changed clothes, we’ll meet to report the outcome of our training.”

It seemed I was once more living the civilised life I missed so much.

However, to report that I hadn’t attained Balance Breaker—it was truly shameful.

Part 3

This was actually the first time in over two weeks that we of the Rias Gremory group had all gathered together like this.

After we had gotten our training plans from Azazel-sensei, I had been taken away by a dragon, but it seemed everyone else had split up after that as well. That's why; this was our first gathering since then.

To be honest, this may have been the first time that we had all lived separately from the rest of the group for so long. —Rather, I think it's the first time since I had joined it as a member. Since I didn't know about anything before I was here.

After the ones who had trained outside, me, Kiba, and Xenovia had taken showers and changed our clothes, we all gathered in my room. Why my room? I had inexhaustible doubts about it, but it seemed that the reason was that it was easiest for them to gather here. It seemed there was a problem with going into Buchou's room. Was there something there that she couldn't show us?

So, we had gathered and talked about the contents of our training. Kiba gave a detailed account of his training with his master. Xenovia also recounted the contents of her training. I spoke about my life of survival with Tannin too.

Everyone else had it easy. Kiba and Xenovia had also trained outside, but they seemed to have trained while living at a mountain cottage and a villa belonging to the Gremorys respectively, and a life-style of hunting animals and plants in the mountain and avoiding the fire breath of a dragon for me seemed to be unimaginable to them.

Huh? Huuuuuuuh? That's strange. What's with this? Could it be that I was the only one that had a hard time? I slept outside, you know? With no blankets, nor pillows. I had to sleep there while lying on huge leaves that grew in the Underworld…

“Umm, sensei, wasn’t I the only one living a cruel lifestyle…?”

“I was also just as surprised that you could survive on the mountain. I thought that you would run home midway. That you would begin to live normally on that mountain was also completely outside my expectations.”

“Eeee

a kidnapping!

“No, even so, your physical strength seems to have improved considerably. With this, the time when you can wear the armour in Balance Breaker has just about arrived. —But, you weren’t able to attain Balance Breaker, right?”

Azazel-sensei didn’t seem particularly disappointed that I hadn’t attained it.

“Well, the possibility of you not attaining it was also within the range of my predictions. Yeah, you didn’t receive any shock, Ise. I mean, it’s impossible to attain Balance Breaker when there are no dramatic changes. I thought that something would be changed in you through the survival lifestyle and by coming into contact with a Dragon King-class dragon, but the time wasn’t enough. If it was at least for one more month…”

Impossible! If I had lived another month of that kind of lifestyle, I would die of Buchou-deficiency disease! If I couldn’t feel Buchou’s warmth like this periodically, I’d die!

I buried my face in Buchou’s breasts and shook my head in refusal! No, no! I can’t take going to that mountain again! Buchou also gently caressed my head! Ueeeh! Buchooooooou!

“Well, it’s fine. The report meeting ends here. Tomorrow is the party. You’re all dismissed for today.”

The report meeting ended with sensei’s voice.

In this way, my survival lifestyle came to an end.

The night of that day.

It was bedtime, but somehow Asia and Xenovia were staying in my room. It had been arranged so that me, Asia and Xenovia shared the same bed.

Unable to calm down with both Asia and Xenovia on the wide bed

as well, I slipped into my bed.

Asia was already sound asleep. Perhaps because the bed we shared was wide, Xenovia was laying a little ways away from me. Moreover, for some reason, she seemed to be unable to sleep as she just stared at the ceiling.

Now that I think of it, maybe she couldn't sleep until late because this was the first night that we shared the same room.

"…What's with you, you still can't sleep?"

"…Yeah. When I think of it, I'm not used to sleeping with a man yet. Even if there isn't a sexual meaning to it…I'm tense…"

Hey, hey, hey, seriously? You're tense after saying those kinds of things?

Well, it's not like I don't understand.

"T-That's true. Even I was excited and couldn't sleep the first time I slept together with Buchou and Asia. Having boys and girls of the same age sleep in the same room does that, you know?"

"I-I see. So this is natural, huh? But, Asia is amazing. She seems to be sleeping so peacefully."

"It's because Asia…is always sleeping with me and Buchou at home. She was embarrassed at the beginning, but now she's used to it. Having Asia lying down next to me gives me great peace of mind."

"…Ise-san, please don't leave me…Munya…"

Asia murmured in her sleep…

"Fufufu, I understand the reason why Ise and Buchou think that Asia is cute."

Xenovia said that while giving a wry smile. Right? Asia's cuteness is the best.

And then, before I knew it, my consciousness also slipped away…

and I gave myself into the night.

Part 4

It was the evening of the next day and I was wearing the summer uniform of Kuou Academy while waiting in the parlour. Because today was the night of the party, after all. I had slept for a full half-day today. Thanks to that, I felt like I had greatly recovered from all my built up fatigue.

It had been a long time since I had last worn this uniform. That's because until recently I had only worn my jersey. It really did fit quite nicely.

Just in case, I also wore an armband that had the Gremory pattern inscribed on it. With this, it seems like I was okay for the party.

The girls had been taken away by all the maids, saying that it would take some time for them to get ready.

Hmm, Kiba and Gasper had also gone off somewhere for some kind of business…

“Hyoudou?”

When I turned to look towards the familiar voice—Saji was there. Why was Saji here!?

“Saji, why are you here?”

“Ah, Kaichou will be going to the meeting place along with Rias-senpai and I followed her here. So, Kaichou went to meet with senpai and after that I inevitably ended up wandering aimlessly around the mansion, until I arrived here.”

This main residence really is wide inside as well, after all. So he arrived here after losing his way.

Saji took a seat a little bit away from me and spoke while wearing a serious expression.

“The game will be taking place very soon now.”

“Yeah.”

“I trained.”

“Me too. I was chased around by a dragon on a mountain every day.”

“I-Is that so? You’ve had a hard lifestyle as usual. Well, I also did an extremely hard menu.”

I see. He also put forth great effort in his training. Naturally, it will affect our masters’ victory or defeat. I also had a strong fighting spirit. Saji spoke while scratching his cheek.

“Hyoudou. Do you remember the time when the young devils gathered a month ago?”

“Yeah. What about it?”

“We were serious then….M-My…d-dream is to become a teacher!”

All of a sudden, Saji said that with a red face.

“Teacher? What will you teach?”

Even though he was flushed red, Saji answered my question sincerely.

“Kaichou is trying to establish a Rating Game specialty school in the Underworld. It isn’t an ordinary school. It’s an open school for anyone and that accepts devils regardless of whether they are high-class or low-class, aristocrat or commoner. I heard from Kaichou that things like discrimination and traditions have been softened in the devil industry little by little, but there is still a part at the root of it all that refuses to accept these changes. That’s why the current Rating Game School only accepts high-class devils from aristocratic families. The games have to be equal for everyone—. This is what the present Maou-samas have decided. Though it’s equal, the path of the games is far for low-class devil commoners. That’s strange, right? Though even a non-aristocratic devil may be promoted to a high-level devil depending on the method. The possibility shouldn’t be zero!”

Along with being surprised, I also admired the serious opinions of Saji.

This guy looks seriously towards the future in his own way, huh.

“Kaichou has told me that she wants to do something about that. That she wants to teach so that even low-class devils can participate in the games. That’s why she’ll make a school that anyone can enter in the Underworld! Kaichou is even studying in the human world as well for the sake of that! To give a chance to the ones who never got into the spotlight! Even if it’s just by 1%! Even if it’s almost zero! As long as it’s not zero, one might be able to become a high-class devil! Hyoudou! Even we believe in that possibility and try to become high-class devils, right?”

“Yes, that’s exactly it.”

That’s right. I had set my sights on becoming a high-class devil. Even if the possibility is zero, I have the fighting spirit to make it 100%. Saji made a declaration while raising his fist.

“T-That’s why, I will work as a teacher there. I’ll study a lot, fight in a lot of games, and store up various things. I’ll become a teacher who teaches about [Pawns] with that. Kaichou also said that she wants to help me. Even someone like me may be able to become a school teacher…I-I’ve only done stupid things in the past. I've also caused trouble for my parents and was disliked by the people around me. But, if it’s Kaichou, I can see a dream! I will stay by Kaichou’s side and help her for life! Kaichou’s dream is my dream!”

Saji spoke while feeling embarrassed.

“Hehehe. I kept the fact that I became a devil secret from my mother, but even so she cried when I told her about my future dream. [You, become a teacher!] She may have said that because it doesn’t suit me. But, it wasn’t bad, the relieved face of my mother.”

So that was Saji’s dream. It’s a different path from me. Since we’re the same [Pawns], I had thought we might be the same, but people really are respectively different after all. He has his own dream.

I wanted to become independent of my master in the future and had set my own goal. He intends to serve his master his whole life. Even if we became devils at the same time, the paths we aim for are truly different.

I felt that there was something a little miraculous about such a simple thing.

“I think that’s a wonderful goal, Saji. Become a good teacher.”

“Yeah, it’s also for the sake of that goal that we have to beat you guys this time!”

“Ah, I see. Then, it’s no good. Since we’re the ones who are going to win!”

“No, it’s us. Since we acted so stupidly before, we have to prove ourselves with our results.”

Though we laughed at the same time, his eyes were serious. He won’t back down.

However, a teacher, huh? I suddenly remembered Azazel-sensei, but… well; this guy would never be like that, as expected.

“By the way, Saji.”

“What is it?”

I poked the air with my finger.

“It seems a woman’s nipple is like a buzzer when poked.”

“…W-What’s with that?”

Oh, Saji was listening with apparent interest. As expected, he really is a lewd person just like me!

“I heard about it from Azazel-sensei, that the possibilities of breasts are infinite. It might not be good to go on to the next world with not only lacking the experience of rubbing them, but also of doing other things like poking them. But, to poke…”

“…Hey, Hyoudou. What about me? When will I be able to rub my master’s breasts?”

He discussed that seriously.

“W-Who knows. Even I have never rubbed them. After one piles up luck upon luck, one can rub them.”

Saji drew near me with eyes of anger!

“What’s with that “luck”! None of it has been coming to me, you know!?”

“No, I said too much. Usually, I’m only at the extent where we sleep together and go into the bath together—”

I only said that much, but it was no good. Saji gave an expression which showed the shock he received in the depths of his heart.

He unsteadily moved away from me and feebly sat down in a chair with a GAKUN. He was in a terrible state. His eyes were opened wide, and his whole body was trembling.

“…Sleeping? …Bath…? …What’s with that….? I-I…have never done those things with Kaichou…”

“S-Saji…? Hey…”

I called out to him, but there was no reaction, he just kept murmuring those quiet words.

“Ise, sorry for making you wait. Ara, so Saji-kun came.”

When I looked behind me—there was a dressed-up Buchou there! And all the other club members too!

Amaziiiiiiiiiiing! Everyone had put on makeup and was wearing dresses. Their hair was also done up!

They all looked like princesses! Akeno-san was wearing a western dress today, too! Uwaaaaaaah! This was baaaaaaaad, she was just too lovely. She was a beauty that surpassed excellence!

Asia was also embarrassed, but her dress really suited her. Xenovia also appeared to be unfamiliar with wearing such things, but she was sufficiently taught in being an ojou-sama!

Koneko-chan wore a dress that was a size smaller, but she had a cuteness that would inevitably have her kidnapped by a lolicon!

The problem was Gasper.

“Why are you also wearing a dress!?”

Gasper was also dressed up in a dress! It was so suitable that I could say nothing! I thought he had disappeared because he had some business to take care of, but it was for this instead!

“B-But, I wanted to wear a dress too.”

This guy is so…His girl clothes-wearing habit is so considerable even to this point.

“Saji. Saji, what’s wrong?”

The likewise dress-upped Sona-kaichou was dubiously looking at Saji's state.

So you're shocked to that extent, Saji…

When the dressing up was finished, there was the massive sound of something flying in the garden along with a soft tremor in the ground.

Soon a butler came and spoke to us.

“Tannin-sama and his family have arrived.”

Ossan had come to greet us just as promised!

When we went out to the garden, the best part was there!

Along with Tannin-ossan, there were 10 dragons about the same size as Ossan!

So huuuuuuuuuuuge! Amazing! All the members of Ossan’s group are dragons!

“I came just as promised, Hyoudou Issei.”

“Yeah! Thanks, Ossan!”

“While you all ride on my back, I’ll place a special barrier around you. With that, your hair and clothes won’t get messed up by the wind. Since those things are important to women.”

This dragon is so considerate! As expected of an ultimate-class devil!

“Thank you, Tannin. We’ll be relying on you until we get to the meeting place. The people of Sitri are also here, is that okay?”

“Ooh, Miss Rias. You’re especially beautiful tonight. Please leave that matter to me.”

Thus, we got on the dragon’s back and flew off into the sky of the Underworld! I got to ride on top of Tannin-ossan’s head! A special seat! I held onto the edge and surveyed the sky!

Uwahhah! As I thought, the scenery seen from the back of a dragon is a superb view! Since coming to the Underworld, I haven’t gotten tired of these fantasy experiences! But, I could do without the part of being chased around by a dragon!

[For me to see this scenery from on top of a dragon, it's an experience that can't be described.]

Ddraig gave a rare bitter smile. Ddraig originally had the body of a dragon too, after all.

"Hahahaha, that is an interesting experience, Ddraig. However, there are only three mighty dragons that are still active left, including myself. No, since I was reborn as a devil, the only real ones remaining are Ophis and Tiamat. The rest have either been sealed, or have retired. Yu-Long and Midgardsormr never come out onto the surface anymore. And Ddraig, Albion, Fafnir and Vritra have been sealed into Sacred Gears. —In all ages, strong dragons have been suppressed. Strong dragons are a fearful existence, after all."

Ossan said that in just a slightly lonely tone.

"Now that you mention it, why did dragon Ossan become a devil?"

Ossan seriously responded to my question.

"One reason is that, in this era where there aren't any big battles anymore, I thought that I would get to fight various guys if I participated in the Rating Games. And there's another reason."

"Another reason?"

"…Do you know of a fruit called the dragon apple? It's an apple that dragons eat."

"No, it's my first time hearing of it. Rather, it's a very blunt and obvious name."

"There is a certain race of dragons that can only live by eating that dragon apple. However, the ones that grew in the human world have become extinct because of sudden environmental changes. Now, that fruit only grows in the Underworld. But, dragons are hated in the Underworld. They're detested by both devils and fallen angels. There's no way they would give it away for nothing, right? —That's why; I became a devil and so the territory that grows the fruit was all made my territory. When you exceed a high-class devil,

you can receive a part of the Underworld from the Maou. I had my eyes on that place."

"Then, do those dragons that have food trouble live in Ossan's territory?"

"Yeah, thanks to that, they avoided becoming extinct. And I also performed research on how to artificially grow the dragon apple in my territory successfully. It's a special fruit, so the research takes time. Still, if it lets there be a future for that race, it's better to continue."

Amazing! So he went that far for the sake of helping that race. I thought he truly deserved the title of Dragon King.

"Ossan really is a nice dragon."

Ossan laughed loudly at my words.

"A nice dragon? Gahahahahahahahaha! That's the first time I've been told such a thing! Moreover, I'm greatly obliged to receive praise from the Sekiryuutei! However, boy, the desire for the continuation of one's race is the same among all living beings. It's the same, for humans, devils, and dragons. I only thought of saving my fellow dragons as well. That is what a dragon who has power does for dragons without any power."

"…Amazing! I just blindly wanted to become a high-class devil. A-And, I try dashing forward just because I want to form a harem. Is this kind of mental attitude no good?"

"That kind of thing is fine while you're young. If you're male, it's inevitable that you come to want women and wealth. It isn't good to overdo it, but it's fine if that becomes the driving force that moves you. However, Hyoudou Issei, it's so wasteful to just make a harem your final goal. If you become strong, it's natural for females to approach you. The problem is after getting both women and wealth…It may still be too difficult for someone young like you to understand."

Yeah, it may be a bit difficult for me.

However, because of the various devils I've met since coming here, I've come to think just a little.

—Everyone lives while having a goal.

Wanting to win in the tournament, wanting to become Maou, wanting to save dragons, wanting to become a teacher.

They're all devils, yet what they aim for is completely different. For me, it's to become a Harem King.

That still hasn't changed, but it may be no good to not move towards that realistically and away from my ordinary delusions.

—Various things are needed to become the Harem King I aim to be.

In that way, after I thought about these things with my slow brain while chatting about this and that for a short hour, bright lights began to spread out below me.

It seemed like we had finally arrived at the meeting place.

Part 5

The high-class high rise hotel that was being used as the meeting place for the party was located in a wide clearing within a huge area of forest that was on the edge of Gremory territory.

The scale wasn't incomplete at all! I could see the entirety of the grounds from Tannin-ossan's head, but the scope of it was so great that the town I lived in could completely fit inside of it!

The dragon we were riding on alighted down to a place that was like the grounds used for a sports match. When Ossan came to the skies above these match grounds, lights were simultaneously concentrated on him from below, making him look like something out of a monster movie.

"Then, we'll be going to the waiting space exclusively for large devils."

"Thank you, Tannin."

"Ossan! Thanks!"

Buchou and I gave our thanks to Tannin-ossan. Ossan and the other dragons then flapped their wings again and moved towards another area of the party grounds.

Then, we were led by the hotel employees who had come to pick us up at the sports grounds…and we got into an expensive-looking limousine! …Hahaha, It was truly an astonishing way of continuing on after coming this far.

The dress-wearing Buchou and Asia sat down next to me.
Everybody from the Sitri family sat in the back of the limousine.

Buchou gave an explanation while fixing my collar.

"There are also facilities located around the hotel, and the army is also standing by here. It is much stricter here than in the lower urban areas, you know?"

Buchou then took a comb out from an expensive-looking bag and combed my hair. It seems my hair had become disheveled because I rode on Tannin-ossan's head instead of on his back. Though I didn't feel any truly strong wind thanks to the barrier he mentioned.

"Buchou, what about Azazel-sensei?"

"It seems that he will head here after joining up with Onii-sama and the others on another route. Since they're really close friends, after all…"

Hahaha…So they hit it off well with each other as mutual powerful leaders.

I was smiling, but just then Buchou got a serious look.

"Ise, you couldn't hear because you were on Tannin's head, but just before, I declared war on Sona. —Saying that [we will beat you for the sake of our dream]."

So such a thing happened on Ossan's back! I was too absorbed in looking at the scenery from the air then.

"A school. —A Rating Game school. For the sake of building that, Sona studied the school system of the human world while living as a student there. The schools of the human world, which anyone can enter, are important for Sona, after all."

Saji said the same thing. That Kaichou was attending Kuou Academy for the sake of her dream.

"Buchou, Saji also said it. That he would [become a teacher]. His eyes were shining as he said it, but it's a serious goal to him…"

"Even so, we will win. We have our own dreams and goals as well."

Buchou's determination was firm. She wouldn't go easy on her opponent, even if it was a friend.

In that case, I will also strike against the opponent in front of me. Right, Saji? I'm going to come straight at you.

While I was thinking this, the limousine arrived at the hotel. When we came out, we were welcomed by many employees. We entered inside like that, and once Akeno-san confirmed us at the front desk, we went into the elevator.

“It seems the party is on the huge top floor. Ise, if you’re called out to by any people from distinguished families, make sure to greet them properly, okay?”

“Y-Yes. But, Buchou. Tonight’s party…was prepared by Maou-sama for the young devils, right?”

“That is the official stance. In truth, people won’t get very excited even once we enter the room. This is an annual custom. If anything, it’s more like a gathering for the members of all the distinguished families to meet. We, the next family heads, are just extras, while it’s really a party for our fathers to enjoy themselves. In reality, they’ve made reservations at the nearby facilities until the fourth or fifth after-parties. Proof of that is that they arrived at the meeting place separately from us. They probably gathered together before the young people arrived and may have already finished their alcohol.”

Buchou grumbled with a displeased face. Next to us, Akeno-san and Kiba were also giving bitter smiles.

Haah, Buchou seems fed up with this kind of party…or rather, with the actions of her father and the others. In other words, although it was sponsored by the Maou, since it seemed to be a casual kind of party that’s still different from a high-society party, her father and the others looked forward to it very much, as it was one of the few times they could cut loose.

The elevator arrived, and when we stepped out, the entrance to the meeting place also opened.

We were led into a gorgeous hall! On this incredibly large floor there was a crowd of devils and various delicious-looking foods to eat! The ceiling had—as expected, a huge chandelier! I couldn’t stop looking at that chandelier here and now!

[Ooh.]

Everyone noticed Buchou's entrance, and breaths of admiration were let out.

"Princess Rias. You've become more and more beautiful…"

"Sirzechs-sama must also be proud."

Everyone was looking at Buchou. Buchou had said that they wouldn't be excited, but they were plenty excited right now! I was also somewhat happy. And above all I was proud.

—I'm the man that has rubbed this person's breasts!

Fufufu, my face broke into a grin just now. What is this strange feeling of superiority? It could be called a pleasant feeling of only me knowing the secret of the woman that everyone longs for.

"Uuu, there's so many people…"

The dressed-up Gasper was tightly sticking to my back. You again… Aren't you wearing a dress for the sake of being seen in it? How can you enter here with that hikikomori spirit of yours…? As usual, his cross-dressing hobby is still difficult to understand…

Ah, but, he's improved a little, hasn't he? Even though he was exposed to the curious gazes of so many people here, he didn't try to run away. So he's also trained for this too.

That's great, Gasper. I'll give you some candy afterwards.

"Ise, we're making our rounds of greetings."

"Heh?"

I had an idiotic face, but even so, it seemed the fact that the legendary dragon had become a devil was famous and there were many high-class devils who wanted to greet me.

For that reason, I ended up being led around by Buchou as we circulated the floor. I was surprised by how the gentlemanly

behaviour that Buchou's mother had taught me was more effective than I had expected.

I see, now that I've become a part of Buchou's group, it was an indispensable skill.

Buchou's mother. Thank you very much! Thanks to you, I wasn't embarrassing myself!

"Ah, I'm so tired."

Having finished my greetings, I was freed, but…

Me, Asia and Gasper sat down on chairs prepared in a corner of the floor. Buchou and Akeno-san were a distance away conversing with some female devils.

Kiba was—surrounded by all the female devils! Damn it! Die, good-looking guy!

Though even if I say that, since this really was my first time at such a party, me and Asia and the others were all mentally fatigued and completely exhausted in a corner.

Occasionally, there were male devils that greeted the cute Asia. As I thought, Asia's cuteness is well understood even in the world of devils, because she's so extremely cute.

"Ise, Asia, Gasper, I've gotten some food, eat up."

Xenovia, who had gotten up from her seat a little while ago, was skilfully holding a massive quantity of dishes. On top of the dishes were various extravagant foods.

"Sorry about this, Xenovia."

"No, it's nothing. This amount is inexpensive. Look, it's better for Asia to have a drink too."

"Thank you very much, Xenovia-san…Since it's my first time doing

this kind of thing, I was nervous and my throat got dry…”

Asia accepted the glass of juice from Xenovia and started drinking it.

I started on the dish I’d been given…It came complete with chopsticks. Well, since there were reincarnated devils besides us in here, they must have been prepared for every way to pick up one’s food.

And then, there was a silhouette in front of me. It was a girl wearing a dress. She was staring at me really hard. Who was she?

Huh? I feel like I’ve seen her somewhere before…

“Ah, you’re—”

“I-It’s been a while, Sekiryuutei.”

“The sister of that yakitori bastard.”

Yes, it was the sister of Rias’ former fiancé, Raiser Phoenix.

How nostalgic. It’s been several months since then, right?

“It’s Ravel Phoenix! Geez, this is why low-class devils are so slow and disagreeable.”

She was really angry. As I thought, she was angry because of the drama from the cancellation of the engagement, huh.

“Sorry. So, is your brother doing well?”

When I spoke about her brother, Ravel sighed.

“…Thanks to you, he’s been in low spirits. It seems that his defeat and having Rias-sama stolen away by you was a great shock. Well, since he had always relied on his talent and got cocky because of it, it should have been a good lesson for him.”

Arara, how harsh. So, she severely cuts at her brother too. What a sharp tongue.

“Hahahaha…You’re pretty merciless. You were also part of your brother’s group, right?”

“About that, I’ve currently finished trading, and I’ve now become my mother’s servant. My mother traded away an unused piece she had in exchange for me. Since my mother said that she would trade me again when I found someone whose family I want to become part of, I’m essentially a free [Bishop] now. Since my mother doesn’t participate in the games.”

“Trading?”

I quizzically thought about this word that I wasn’t familiar with.

“Huh? Don’t you know? Trading, according to the rules of the Rating Games, it’s possible to exchange pieces between devils [Kings]. On the condition that they’re the same kind of piece.”

Heeh, so there was also something like that.

“B-By the way, Sekiryuutei—”

“Please stop it with the Sekiryuutei. My name is Hyoudou Issei. You’re the same age as me, right? Then, speaking to me normally is fine. Everyone calls me [Ise], you know?”

So I said, but since she’s a devil, she can freely choose her appearance, can’t she? Though she may look the same age as me, could she be older? No, judging from the times we’ve met each other, I get the sense that she’s the same age.

“I-Is it really okay for me to call you by your name!?”

Eh…? What’s with that reaction? She’s a bit happy? Impossible, she looks down on me so much, after all.

“*C-Cough*. T-Then, I’ll oblige and call you Ise-sama without reservation.”

“Sama? No, no, it’s fine without such a thing.”

“No, this is important!”

…Hahaha, I understand this girl even less than Xenovia. It's difficult keeping company with her. And then, an Onee-san that I recognised also appeared.

"Ravel-sama. Danna-sama's[19] friend is calling for you."

If I remembered correctly, this person is from Raiser's family. An Onee-san called Isabella, who hurt my face badly with a flicker. Her naked body that I saw when her clothes fell apart is still preserved inside my brain.

"I understand. Ise-sama, the next time we meet, would you like to have some tea with me? A-A-A-And if it's okay with you, would you like to have a homemade cake p-p-prepared by me?"

Ravel suddenly raised the hem of her dress, curtsied and then left.

Somehow, I don't understand that girl very well.

"Hey, Hyoudou Issei."

This time it was Isabella-san who spoke to me.

"You're Isabella-san of the Phoenix family, right?"

"Yes. You gave me a good blow back then. I still remember it. It seems you've become even stronger. When you become even stronger, I'll be able to boast about my story as well."

"Umm, are you that girl's…Ravel's escort?"

"Well, something like that. Because that girl has things that she can't grasp as a child, like our master Raiser-sama…Since that battle during the engagement party, Ravel has only talked about you. She seems to have found the fight between you and Raiser-sama very impressive."

"Isn't she just complaining? Since I interfered in her brother's engagement, and made some thoughtless remarks to her too."

"…No, it's the opposite. Well, it's fine. You'll understand eventually."

“? In any case, please tell her that having tea with her would be okay with me.”

“Really? Thank you for that. Ravel will be happy. Now then, please excuse me now. Please have a good time at the party.”

With that, Isabella-san waved her hand and left just like that. I really don’t get it…

Well, there’s no use being troubled about it anymore, tea is fine, right?

“…Ise-senpai, you surprisingly have a lot of devil friends…”

Gasper said that with a look of admiration, but…Does it really look like a lot?

Hmm, I don’t know. But, I have met various devils since coming here.

However, my encounters with devils besides Buchou and my friends have a lot of value to me. The things I now know like about the problem of discrimination, and about dragons were a lot. I think that I’m glad to know these things now.

Not only power, but such things may also be important for me to catch up to Vali. But, the stupid me also has a limit to my brain capacity! …Hah, I wish I had been born smart.

As I sighed about that, a small shadow came into my sight.

—It was Koneko-chan.

For some reason, she was quickly heading out of the party room. Her expression seemed absorbed in something. Was there something wrong? I was suddenly seized with anxiety. I had a bad feeling about this.

“Asia, Xenovia, please wait here.”

“Ise-san, what’s wrong? The Maou-sama’s greeting will be starting soon.”

“No, there’s a little acquaintance of mine here that I want to go see. I’ll return by the time of the greeting!”

“Alright. We’ll stay here.”

“Yeah!”

I had lied to the two of them. I wanted to keep them safe. In any case, I stood up from my seat and went into the direction that Koneko-chan headed in—.

Koneko-chan went down on the elevator? Is she going down to the bottom?

Once I confirmed that the elevator next door opened, I boarded it. Then, someone else got on the elevator. When I turned around, it was Buchou!

“What’s wrong? Your expression changed.”

“I saw Koneko-chan suddenly leave as if following something.”

“I see, so you were worried. I understand, I’ll go too.”

“Yes! But, how did you know that I was going to board the elevator?”

To the puzzled me, Buchou said the best possible thing while smiling.

“It’s because I’m always watching you.”

Part 6

The elevator arrived on the first floor. After me and Buchou stepped out, we described Koneko-chan to nearby devils and asked if she had passed by.

Having discovered that Koneko-chan had been seen by various people going outside, Buchou hurriedly called forth a bat familiar and sent it out into the sky. Buchou and I waited in front of the fountain that stood outside the hotel until the bat returned.

“As I thought, Koneko-chan’s behaviour is abnormal.”

“Yes. However, what was Koneko-chan following all the way out here?”

Buchou brooded deeply over my question, but she said with just a grim expression that she suspected that Koneko had come across something serious. Rather, it seemed like Buchou had just realised something.

After a little while, Buchou’s bat returned.

“It seems it found her. —The forest? So she’s gone to the forest surrounding the hotel?”

The forest! Koneko-chan! Just why on earth did you go there!?

Buchou and I started running after the bat!

After we left the familiar places behind, Buchou and I ran through the forest in the dark night. Somehow, although we were in a hurry to find her, I still didn’t have any trouble running like this. Thanks to the results of my survival lifestyle, I could now move relatively easily. Sensei, I’m somehow scared that I may have grown in a different sense!

After we had advanced through the forest for several minutes,

Buchou pulled my arm and made us hide in the shadow of a tree. When I peeked my face out just a little, I saw Koneko-chan over there!

Koneko-chan was restlessly turning her head back and forth in the middle of the forest as if looking for something.

Then, she noticed something and turned her gaze in that direction. We also followed Koneko-chan's gaze and looked.

"It's been a while, hasn't it?"

An unfamiliar voice.

Appearing without making a noise—was a woman wearing a black kimono. Somehow, she seemed similar to Koneko-chan…Wait, she had cat ears on her head!? I-It couldn't be…

I had an inkling about something, but Buchou shushed me and indicated for me to calmly watch.

"—! …You."

Koneko-chan's whole body shook in violent surprise.

"Hello, Shirone. It's me, your onee-chan."

Shirone? That's the first time I'm hearing that name, but was it perhaps Koneko-chan's true name? I knew from Buchou's mother that "Koneko" was a name given to her by Buchou.

"Kuroka-neesama…"

Koneko-chan's voice squeezed out those words.

—! Koneko-chan's onee-san! I had a feeling that's how it was since they were similar, so it was just like I thought!

So this beautiful nekomata onee-san is the "exiled demon" that killed her master…In the future, will Koneko-chan look like her sister? When I imagined it, I got slightly excited!

There was a black cat snuggled up to that onee-san's feet.

"Onee-chan is very impressed that you came this far following after this black cat that sneaked into the party-nya[20]."

I see, Koneko-chan came across that black cat at the party and came here following it.

"…Nee-sama. What is this about?"

There was anger in Koneko-chan's voice. But, Kuroka just smiled.

"Don't make such a scary face. I just had some minor business to take care of. I heard that the devils were holding a big party here, you know? That's why I was a little interested. Nyan♪"

Onee-san waved her hand like a cat and winked cutely! So cute!

Ooooooooow…please don't pinch my face like that, Buchou…

"Hahahaha, could it be that you're a member of the Gremory group?"

A voice that I had heard from somewhere before spoke out—. Then, a good-looking man wearing what looked like ancient Chinese armour came out—it was Son Goku Bikou! Vali's comrade! What was he doing here? Wait. He's a member of the [Khaos Brigade]. Is this a terrorist attack aimed at the party hall!?

Suddenly, Bikou's gaze turned to look in the direction of me and Buchou! So he noticed us!?

"Even if you erase your presence, it's useless. With people like me and Kuroka who know senjutsu, we can approximately detect you with just a slight variation in the flow of your spirit."

Tch! We've been found out! Even though I would have preferred not to fight!

Buchou and I readied ourselves and stepped out from the shadow of the tree. Koneko-chan was surprised to see us.

“…Ise-senpai, Buchou.”

“Yo, damn monkey-san. Is Vali doing well?”

“Hahahaha, pretty much. As for you…Heh, so you’ve become a little stronger, huh?”

Hmm? Did he understand my strength just from looking at my body a little?

While I thought that in puzzlement, Bikou spoke while smiling.

“Didn’t I tell you? I also have an interest in senjutsu, and I know the flow of your spirit to a degree. The volume of aura that covers you has risen since we last met.”

…I see. When other people said it, it seemed that my training really had given me results.

“By the way Buchou, what is senjutsu? Is it different from magic and the sorcery used by magicians?”

Sighing, Buchou gave an explanation to my question.

“Yes, senjutsu is different from magic and sorcery. The biggest difference is that senjutsu stresses the importance of something called chakra, the aura that is the great original power that flows into one’s spirit, in other words one’s life-force, and turns it into a constant current. It’s a power that is both similar yet different from the magic of demons and the light power of angels. Its direct destructive power can’t match that of magic or the power of light, but senjutsu can make use of the unknown part hidden within plants, animals and people. For example, if one learned senjutsu, it’s said that they excel at reading the flow of someone’s spirit, of their aura, and that they can also grasp the movements of a faraway target to a certain degree.”

“We can also control the flow of spirit and can reinforce both the interior and exterior of our bodies, or disturb the spirits of all the surrounding trees, make them bloom, or make them wither-nyan♪. Senjutsu is a skill that manipulates the flow of life, after all. We can disturb our opponent’s spirit, and inflict damage to their life-force

by cutting it. Because the methods for repairing the disorder to one's life-force is limited for the magic of demons and the sorcery of magicians in comparison, this attack method almost always results in death-nyan♪"

Koneko-chan's onee-san explained this while winking! I'm troubled by how she acts so brightly while creating such a dangerous atmosphere at the same time…

I don't really understand the explanation that well, but in other words she's a blooming jii-san equipped with a scouter, right? And moreover this blooming jii-san can influence the life of his opponent with a single fingertip, right?

Well, leaving that aside, the problem is the reason why these guys are here.

"Why are you here? Is this a terrorist attack?"

I asked this frankly, but the two of them just smiled.

"No, we didn't come down here for such a thing. It's just that a standby order has come out in the Underworld. Me and Kuroka are off-duty right now. When the order was given, Kuroka suggested visiting the devils' party. Since she likely wouldn't return easily, I came along with her too. Okay?"

He chattered on pointlessly, this monkey-san. But, as long as he wasn't lying, I understood the gist of it.

In other words, when Koneko-chan's onee-san inspected the party hall with her black cat familiar or something, Koneko-chan coincidentally came across it and chased it here.

"Bikou, who is this boy?"

Koneko-chan's onee-san pointed at me and asked Bikou this.

"The Sekiryuutei."

When she heard that, onee-san's eyes widened.

“Really-nyan? Heh～. So this is the current breasts-loving Sekiryuutei who repelled Vali before.”

…So that was how I was described to her. Well, since it’s true. A breasts-loving Sekiryuutei, huh? That’s also fine.

Bikou spoke while yawning.

“Kuroka～, let’s go back. Since we can’t participate in that party anyway, it’s a waste to stay here.”

“Yes, let’s return. But, I’ll take Shirone with me-nyan. Since I didn’t bring her with me that time♪”

“Arara, if you bring her back with you of your own accord, Vali might get angry, you know?”

“When they know that the same power as mine flows within her, both Ophis and Vali will be convinced, right?”

“Well, that may be so.”

Koneko-chan’s onee-san smiled widely with narrowed eyes. Seeing that, Koneko-chan’s small body shivered. She was scared! —In that case!

I stepped in between the two of them and spoke right in front of them.

“This girl is an important friend among us of the Gremory group. I won’t allow you to take her away.”

Seeing my actions, both Bikou and onee-san laughed.

“No, no, that’s very brave of you, but do you really intend to make me and Kuroka your opponents? This time, we’ll leave immediately once we take this girl, so it’ll be fine for you, right?”

What kind of nonsense is Bikou saying!? This damn monkey!

Buchou stepped forward with an angered expression.

“This child is my servant. I won’t let you put even a single finger on her.”

“Ara-ara-ara-ara, what are you saying-nya? She’s my little sister. I have the right to love her. A high-class devil like you doesn’t have that privilege.”

Biri.

I understood that this place’s atmosphere had completely changed. Buchou and onee-san were glaring at each other, and carried the aspect of an explosive situation! It was onee-san who stopped glaring first. She spoke while giving a wide grin.

“Since you’re so troublesome, I’ll kill you-nyan♪”

—.

At that instant, I was seized by an indescribable sensation! What is this, this feeling of having transported to another space? Even though the scenery hadn’t changed, it was like the air and mood had changed or something…

“…Kuroka, so you learned not only senjutsu, youjutsu and devil magic, but also the skill to control space?”

Buchou said this while making a sour face.

“I didn’t go as far as learning how to control time, but I have fairly picked up on how to control space. If I use the essentials of barrier techniques, it’s relatively easy, after all. I covered this entire forest with a barrier and isolated it from the outside world-nyan. That’s why even if we do flashy things here, it won’t leak outside and devils from outside won’t come in. You’re going to get pleasantly killed here by us and say goodbye-nya♪”

What!? Then, we’ve been imprisoned in this forest! What’s more, even if we fight, no one outside will notice it! Ooh! So these guys can’t be defeated by just me and Buchou!? Should we run away? No, it doesn’t seem like we can run away!

At that time—. From high in the sky, a voice was heard.

“When I received information that Miss Rias and Hyoudou Issei had come to this forest and I quickly came to look, to think I would be sealed in by a barrier…”

This voice! When I looked up, there was—.

“Tannin-ossan!”

The monster dragon! Tannin-ossan! What timing! Uwah, I’m really glad! It seems he entered this place just before Koneko-chan’s onee-san spread out the barrier!

“What an ominous aura. These visitors aren’t suitable for this party.”

Bikou looked delighted to see this dragon in the sky.

“Oh, oh, oh! If it isn’t the former-Dragon King [Blaze Meteor Dragon] Tannin! So you came! This is already a big problem, Kuroka! We have no choice but to fight now!”

“You seem happy, monkey-san. Very well. If we take down two necks that are above Dragon King class, Ophis will also be silent on the matter.”

Two necks! So I was also counted!? I was, wasn’t I!? No! I’ll die!

“Kintoun[21]!!!”

As he shouted that out, a gold cloud appeared at Bikou’s feet and he then flew off into the sky where Tannin-ossan was!

“Nyoi-Bo[22]!”

A long staff appeared in Bikou’s hands and he released it while aiming it at ossan!

“Exteeeeeeend! Nyoi-Bo!!”

Gyuuuuuuuuun!

The staff extended and tried to hit ossan, but—he avoided it with a

speed that didn't fit his huge figure!

Fast! Even though he's so large, he can move himself so agilely!

"Once more!"

Bikou horizontally moved the staff while it was still extended and chased after ossan who had avoided it the first time! But ossan used his wings skilfully and rotated in mid-air, avoiding it! The still rotating ossan opened his mouth wide!

Gobaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

A large mass of fire covered the entire sky! Amaziiiiiiiiiing! That amount is incomparable to what he let out during the time with me! Looking up, the entire sky was nothing but fire!

That's right, sensei did say it. That ossan's breath of fire was the same level as a meteor's impact!

More significant though is that evasion skill with that huge body! Even though he's a huge monster, he can really move! That's right, now that I think about it, during the game of tag with me, he was able to quickly whoosh around despite his huge body.

So a Dragon King has high specs in every kind of ability!

[No, Tannin was still holding back the power of his breath there.]

Seriously, Ddraig!? That was holding back?

[It's because, if he unleashed his true breath, not just the party hall, but we, too, would disappear. He's thoughtful in his own way. Even with that, though, the number of people who can stop Tannin are limited.]

I was being pursued on that mountain by such an amazing person!? That's scary! After the mass of fire faded away, the form of Bikou emitting smoke from his entire body appeared in the air.

"Ahaha! Not bad! Former-Dragon King!"

He was actually laughing! His armour and clothes were burned, but his main body was fine! He survived being engulfed by such powerful flames! As expected of Son Goku!

“Hmph! I was wondering what kind of person this Son Goku was! You seem quite happy to have received an attack from me, Tannin!”

“The name’s Bikou! Nice to meet you, Dragon Boss!”

“Kukukuku. You talk like a true monkey. Do you really understand who you have made your opponent right now?”

“I’m also descended from a legendary demon, you know. I can’t afford to lose so quickly.”

“In any case, I’ll be your opponent, monkey. Meanwhile, Miss Rias and Hyoudou Issei will defeat that cat. —They’re the master of the Sekiryuutei and the Sekiryuutei, you know? You’ll have to overcome them.”

Even if you say something like that! This onee-san in front of us can’t be beaten by me and Buchou!

“Hahahah! You’ve really gone out big! I’m fine just by myself!”

“Don’t speak so arrogantly, monkey. You’re just a single monkey. You won’t be any trouble! Besides, what happened to the pig and demon sage[23]? Did you break up with them?”

“You mean the descendants of Hakkai and Gojou[24]? Hahahaha! They, including the people of my family, are all conservatives! Every last one of them is satisfied with the current state of things! However, I love things that are fun! That’s why I happily accepted the invitation to join the [Khaos Brigade] and now act together with the Hakuryuukou Vali!”

“Hmph! Your temperament may be the closest to the first generation of Son Goku, but what are you scheming with the Hakuryuukou? According to rumour, only your unit is permitted to move separately from the rest! I also heard that you’re the only team that didn’t accept Ophis’ [snake]!”

“If you’d like to know, beat me!”

“Watch what you say, damn monkey! This place is the hell-like Underworld, called the [world of the dead]! Know that this is the best place for small fry like you people to repent!”

Don! Dogon!

Ossan and the monkey began to fight fiercely with each other in the air! Well, since it seems like ossan will beat that monkey, I’m relieved, but the problem is…

“Nyan♪”

Koneko-chan’s onee-san! She was giving a bewitching smile, but there was a dark ominous aura permeating her whole body that even I could feel!

Sensei’s aura was also black, but his had more of a feeling of vice than evil. This one here was completely evil! I could feel a strong malice and killing intent directed at us!

“…Nee-sama. I’ll go with you. So please overlook these two people!”

—!? Koneko-chan had suddenly blurted out such a thing!

“What are you saying—”

I started to speak out, but,

“What are saying!? Koneko! You’re a servant of my group! I won’t allow you to do as you please!”

In a flash, Buchou tightly embraced Koneko-chan!

However, Koneko-chan shook her head.

“…It’s no good. I understand best nee-sama’s power. Nee-sama’s power rivals that of an ultimate-class devil. For Buchou and Ise-sempai…Even with the power of a former-Dragon King, I don’t think you can capture my sister who excels in both genjutsu and

senjutsu…”

“No, even so, I absolutely won’t hand you over to that person’s side! To this nekomata that didn’t try to help Koneko-chan who cried so much!”

Onee-san smiled at Buchou’s anger.

“It’s because a youkai cannot help another youkai. However, this time, I simply want Shirone because I want another piece under my control. I can understand Shirone’s power better than a red-haired onee-san like you, you know?”

Koneko-chan shook her head at onee-san’s words.

“…No…I don’t need that kind of power…I don’t need a dark power like that…I don’t need a power that brings misfortune to people like that…”

She started to tremble and shed tears. Buchou hugged Koneko-chan even more tightly.

“Kuroka…You who had been blinded by power left a wound on the heart of this girl that won’t disappear for her whole life. After you killed your master and left, this child saw hell. When I first met her, there were no feelings left in her. Koneko was betrayed by you, who was her only family to her, lost a future to rely on, and was despised and abused by other devils, to the point where she was going to be disposed of…She saw many harsh things. That’s why I will show her many fun things! This girl is Toujou Koneko, [Rook] of Rias Gremory’s group! My important servant devil! I won’t let you put even a single finger on her!”

Hearing that, Koneko-chan—began to overflow with tears.

Buchooooooooooooou! I cried at Buchou’s love! Even though I wasn’t Koneko-chan, I greatly wept! Because receiving words overflowing with such love is more than servants like us deserve! This is why Buchou is the best! The woman I fell in love with is the strongest!

“…I don’t want to go…I am Toujou Koneko. Kuroka-neesama, I

don’t want to go with you! I want to live with Rias-buchou! To live!”

Koneko-chan cried that out! That was a declaration that could also be called her way of breaking off her relationship with her sister.

Alright! When you say that, I can’t pull back either! I’ll protect Koneko-chan!

After hearing that, onee-san briefly showed a bitter smile, and then gave a derisive laugh that seemed to freeze my whole body.

“Then, die.”

Suu.

A thin mist-like substance sprung out from onee-san. It gradually spread and reached us. And the fog didn’t stop there, and continued to cover up the whole forest.

The mist was really thick. I could confirm it in front of me. However, there was an ominous air about it that made me dreadfully shudder. When we came into contact with the fog—.

“—Ah.”

Ton.

At that moment, Buchou knelt down next to me! Eh? What happened?

“…This is.”

Next Koneko-chan also dropped to her knees while covering her mouth! Wait, did Buchou and Koneko-chan receive some kind of attack?

“Hmm, so this mist doesn’t work on you because you’re the Sekiryuutei, huh? It’s a poison mist which only works on devils and youkai-nyan. Because the poison is thin, one suffers a little while it spread throughout the body. I won’t kill you quickly. I’ll kill you all gradually-nyan♪”

Before I had realised it, onee-san had sat down on a high tree branch and was looking down on us!

Rather, poison mist!? Moreover, that's a heartless way of thinking! What an evil intention! However, I was the only one not affected. Was it because I was harbouring Ddraig in me? I didn't really understand the reason very well.

Buchou began to fire magic bullets from beside me!

Don! The attack hit onee-san completely! Her body vanished!

We got her…or not. Buchou didn't seem to feel any resistance from her attack.

"That was a good attack. But it's useless, useless. I can easily make a clone of myself with the essentials of genjutsu."

Onee-san's voice echoed through the forest. S-Suddenly, silhouettes were born one after another within the mist and all of there were women wearing kimonos! They were Koneko-chan's onee-san! Clones!? So this was an illusion!

They all looked real, and I couldn't tell them apart! All these onee-sans were wearing the same auras over their bodies!

"…If you can't read the flow of spirit, you can't deal with genjutsu used by skilled practitioners."

Koneko-chan said that while falling to all fours. She seemed to be in pain! If there was some kind of counteraction method…Could Asia do something if she were here? No, leaving aside injuries, I don't know whether it would be effective on this kind of poison!

"Boosted Gear!"

I made the red gauntlet appear on my left arm, but wasn't the sound just now different from usual? When I looked, the light in the jewel wasn't a lot and it had become blackish! What was this!?

[…Partner, the Sacred Gear won't move.]

What do you mean, Ddraig!? Why is it like this at such a crucial time!?

[The Sacred Gear has entered an ambiguous state.]

Ambiguous!? Why had it become like that?

[With that training, you reached a crossroad. I think the Sacred Gear will change with one more push, but I don't know whether that change will be a normal power-up, or Balance Breaker.]

In other words, my Sacred Gear has stopped before a crossroads, and is wavering between a normal power-up and Balance Breaker?

[If you put it simply, yes. In a situation where the choices have multiplied, the Boosted Gear's own system is confused on which option to follow.]

So both the normal power-up and Balance Breaker look good to it?

[Yeah. If it does a normal power-up, you may be able to achieve victory in a flash, but if a dramatic change isn't born inside you, you won't be able to attain Balance Breaker. But remember this. Right now, you only have a chance to attain Balance Breaker. The rest depends on you.]

Even if you tell me such a thing! What should I do…? I don't know what to do even if you suddenly say that I need to go through a dramatic change! What do I have to do to attain Balance Breaker!? Damn it! If I knew it was going to be like this, I should have asked Kiba what kind of feeling he had when he did it!

Hey, Ddraig. Is it bad if I go for the power-up and leave Balance Breaker for next time?

[You won't be able to grasp this state again whenever you want. It may be months or years before the chance comes again.]

Then, I've been given a very important chance right now! It would be wasteful to use it for a normal power-up! What do I need to do to attain it? I don't knooooooooooow!

“Arara, is Sekiryuutei-chan unable to activate his Sacred Gear? But, I’m going to shoot-nyan♪”

One of the onee-san illusions stuck out its hand—began to shoot what looked like magic bullets at Buchou and Koneko-chan who were suffering from the poison!

Don’t joke with me! I dashed forward and rushed to become a shield for them!

Doooooooooooooooooooooon!

“Guhah!”

I was hit by blasts full of destructive power! It hurts! Damn it! It really huuuuuuuurts! I got hit by one shot right in the front!

My uniform was also blown away from a direct hit! Thanks to that, my front was naked! …A place on my chest burst open a little and blood flowed out.

“Ise…”

Buchou tried to move forward, but because of the pain, she couldn’t stand up well!

“Buchou! Please don’t move! The poison will spread through your body! Don’t worry, an attack like this is noth—”

Doggooooooooon!

Before I could finish speaking, I was hit by another magic bullet! Guhhah…!

Because it was a surprise attack that I had received before I was ready, the pain was intense…!

From just that second attack, I fell to my knees…This is bad. If it’s like this, I won’t be able to endure five more shots…

“So weak. This is Vali’s rival? Did you really drive away Vali?”

Onee-san simply sneered at me…Hehehe, truly, just how much more will I continue to be ridiculed like this…I'm pitiful. I won't show my power in a pinch.

—I'm always like this.

I can't show my power at critical times.

Did I save Asia? Did I rescue Buchou?

Everyone had praised me, but in truth it wasn't like that. It wasn't like that!

—Asia died once.

—Buchou cried once.

Because I couldn't do anything at either of those times, it turned out like that.

Power that can't be put to use to prevent others from being hurt… That's just wrong! I was once again trying to repeat the same thing again…

—I can't rescue Koneko-chan right here and now.

I made the people I loved experience sorrowful feelings before because my power wasn't enough.

After each time, I was given a second chance to save them thanks to the help of others.

With just that. It was meaningless like that!

—What kind of legendary dragon can't save people the first time!?

"…I won't let you touch Buchou and Koneko-chaaaaaaaaan!"

Doooooooooo!

I was hit by another blast. I was blown backwards by its power and my back crashed into a huge tree!

Idiot…A blow to the back…My consciousness faded for an instant from the great pain…Damn it, my body won't move…!

My body had stopped functioning more from the shock of impact to my back than the pain…Though I'm still conscious…

"Damn it…"

I—stood up. I was so clumsy and pitiful that tears flowed from my eyes. It wasn't from the pain.

—It's mortifying.

To not be able to display my power when driven into a corner… Even though I didn't want anyone to get hurt. Even though I wanted to save everyone. My power couldn't stop people from being hurt again…

While crying, I crawled on the ground and approached where Buchou and Koneko-chan were.

When I came in front of the two of them, I pushed fighting spirit into my body.

"Nuuuuuuuuu!"

I held down the pain somehow and stood up on trembling legs… Alright, I can still stand.

However, the frustrating tears wouldn't stop.

"You may be Koneko-chan's onee-san, but…I won't forgive you for making Koneko-chan cry…"

I said this openly and frankly, but onee-san just laughed.

"For such a weak guy like you to say such a thing…Shirone is also serious. It's one thing if a cooler-looking and strong prince with a sword says that, but when someone like you says it while having blood clinging to your body, girls will only draw back-nyan♪. How disgusting."

“…Ise-senpai.”

Koneko-chan whispered to me.

I spoke while smiling bitterly.

“Koneko-chan…though I have a legendary dragon lodged in my body, I can’t do anything…If I had gotten stronger those times with Asia and Buchou, if I had displayed my dragon power, they wouldn't have had such sorrowful experiences…—I’m a talentless and useless devil.”

I…am an incompetent devil. I also can’t display the power of my Sacred Gear very well…I truly am worthless.

“Even though all the previous Sekiryuuteis achieved Balance Breaker in a short time…it will take who knows how many months for me. I understood that. I already understood that from the very beginning. Even though I possess the power of the Sekiryuutei, it’s wasted on me. Because I’m useless…I can’t do anything for you, Koneko-chan. I thought I could at least become a shield for you, but…”

However, Koneko-chan shook her head.

“…Ise-senpai isn’t worthless…Did you know? Most of the previous Sekiryuuteis were people that drowned and lost their heads in their power…I think that they were swallowed by the enormous power they had…My nee-sama is the same…Even if one has power…if they don’t have kindness…they’ll definitely go out of control…Ise-senpai is a gentle Sekiryuutei…Even if your power is a bit lacking…That’s a wonderful thing…You’re surely the first among the previous ones to be a gentle Sekiryuutei. That’s why—”

Koneko-chan smiled even though she was in pain from the poison. It was a dazzling smile.

“Please become a gentle [Welsh Dragon]…”

Koneko-chan…I…

After hearing Koneko-chan’s words, I felt like I understood

something inside me.

“—Buchou. I think I understand a little what I was lacking in myself to attain Balance Breaker.”

Yes, I felt that I saw the true meaning in Koneko-chan’s words just now.

“I’m probably going to need Buchou’s power in order to attain Balance Breaker.”

I will attain it by borrowing Buchou’s power—.

“…I understand! If you’re fine with me, I’ll lend you my power! So, what do I need to do?”

Buchou nodded even though she was in pain from the poison. I made up my mind, took a big gulp, and spoke.

“—Please let me poke your breasts!”

“—!”

At my request, Buchou—became speechless. However, after thinking a little, she spoke with a look of determination.

“…I understand. If I can realise your wish with that…”

—!? …I was bewildered by her ready consent! Impossible! Is such a thing possible!? It’s no joke! Buchou, I really do want to poke your nipples!

“R-Really!? I can poke them!? I can really press on Buchou’s nipples with my fingers!? It’s really okay!?”

Burun!

Buchou pulled down her dress and exposed her bared front with trembling hands, summoning her great jugs! Because the thing that restrained them was gone, her abundant breasts jiggled!

Bubah! To this pure undressing, I could only spurt out a nosebleed

in reaction!

“…Please do it quickly. I-It’s embarrassing…”

Buchou was turning both pale from the poison and red from embarrassment! I’m sorry, Buchou! I didn’t think it would possibly turn out like this!

“H-Hey! What are you doing in the middle of a battlefield!?”

From high above the thin mist, Tannin-ossan gave out an astonished shout.

“Ossan! Please support me while I poke Buchou’s nipples!”

“Poke her nipples!? Poke her nipples, you say!? What are you saying!? What are you trying to do in the middle of a battlefield!?”

“If I poke them, the possibility that I will attain Balance Breaker is high!”

“So the training with me was a waste!? You truly are an idiot!”

At that time, Koneko-chan’s onee-san gave a puzzled expression.

“Hey, Bikou! Is that some kind of strategy? Rias Gremory has revealed her breasts and intends to do something with the Sekiryuutei.”

“Don’t ask me! The thought process of the Sekiryuutei is in a different dimension from us, you know!”

What a rude monkey! I’m serious here! I think that I have no choice but to poke Buchou’s nipples in order to attain Balance Breaker!

The talk I had with sensei had a dramatic impact on me. The dramatic change I first thought of after the conversation with Koneko-chan is—to poke breasts.

Because! After sensei told me about it, that was the only thing that filled my brain, and I had wild delusions all this time about just poking them! If I poke them, I should be able to change!

—. Having Buchou's breasts immediately in front of me, I wavered… Oh no. This is bad.

"O-Ossan! I have a serious problem!"

"What's wrong!? What is it!?"

I thought that it was better to ask the former-Dragon King here!

"The right breast or the left breast! Which should I poke first!?"

"You damn idioooooooot! Right or left, it's the same thing! Just poke it already and attain Balance Breakeeeeeeeeeer!"

"Don't joke around! Right and left aren't the same thiiiiiiiiiiiing! It's important! It's my first buzzer! It's a once in a lifetime thing! Answer seriouslyyyyyyyyyyyyy!"

For some reason, me and ossan were quarrelling! Damn it! Ossan doesn't understand! Which breast I poke is an important matter!

"Buchou! What's your recommendation!?"

If it's like this, I'll ask the person herself!

"Geez! You idiot! In that case, you should just poke them both at the same time!"

"—!?"

What a ground-breaking idea! I shed tears at my master's answer!

I aimed both my index fingers at each of Buchou's breasts. This is fine. With this, I won't miss.

My body was in very bad shape from the damage delivered by Koneko-chan's onee-san, but this situation where I can poke breasts gave me unbelievable energy!

Then, after gulping, I suddenly moved forward my fingers as they aimed at the breasts—Zumuh.

Munyun.

Munyu, munyu, munyuuuuuu.

With this elasticity, softness and feel of her skin, Buchou's breasts really were the best!

Without being violent, I gently and thoroughly buried my fingers in her breasts.

Bubuh.

Seeing Buchou's breasts wrapping around my fingers, I spurted a large amount of blood from my nosebleed. At that time—.

"…Iyan."

Buchou let her voice leak out slightly—. I didn't miss hearing that!

Inside me, something revolutionary burst open—.

It spread. Something vast—took over my mind.

Within the tears that wouldn't stop, I saw it.

—The beginning of universe.

[—You attained it. You really managed to attain it!]

Ddraig laughed inside me and let out an innocent cry.

[Welsh Dragon Balance Breaker!!!!!!!!!]

The light returned to the jewel, and on the contrary began to emit a huge mass of red aura that it didn't have until now! The aura wrapped around my entire body!

"…You're the worst. What a lewd Sekiryuutei…"

Even though her face was ghastly pale, Koneko-chan gave a retort to me. Sorry! I'm a lewd Sekiryuutei!

Then—. The aura which covered my body changed into armour, and clad itself on me.

“Balance Breaker, [Boosted Gear Scale Mail]! It’s been achieved here by poking my master’s breasts!”

Douuuuuuuuuuun!

My surroundings were blow away by the aura I released! A small crater was created with me at its centre…Alright, my body is overflowing with power! This is—Balance Breaker!

[Partner, congratulations. But, you’re terrible. I’m going to genuinely cry soon.]

Ddraig gave me praise. And his voice was tearful.

“Yeah, thank you. And sorry for being perverted! So, how is my state?”

[You can maintain Balance Breaker for thirty minutes. The results of your training have come out. For the first Balance Breaker state of the weak you, that’s a fairly good time limit.]

How many times can I do my max doubling?

[I think that each time will be used up within five minutes if you release it at the max. You can do it five times at the most. When you include your other movements, your sixth time will be the same as nothing. It’s the same when you use the transfer ability too.]

So if I use this power well, I can fight for fifteen minutes.

[You don’t need that long. —Look, stick out your hand, and try firing a magic bullet like usual.]

Following Ddraig’s instructions, I stuck out my hand and aimed at Koneko-chan’s onee-san.

Doh! It fired in an instant! It passed right by onee-san and went far into the forest.

The next moment—. A red flash unfolded.

Doddoooooo

Kuroka's hands began to be clad in two different powers each.

Dou!

Just like that, she started to shoot two different kinds of surges from both her hands! I received it right in the front!

Dodon!

…I felt the impact of the surge blast, but there was no pain. Smoke rose from armour but—there was no damage. My armour was still solid as usual!

"Is that all?"

Kuroka's expression changed at my lack of damage and she was shocked.

"It didn't work!? No way. I built up a considerable amount of spiritual power!"

Doh!

I vigorously leaped forward and closed the distance between me and Kuroka instantly!

"Don't get carried away!"

Kuroka began to shoot countless more of the surges from before, but I either ploughed through them or flicked them away, and approached right in front of her!

Buuuuuuuuuuuun!

I lunged with my fist, but stopped it right in front of Kuroka's nose. The surrounding air trembled from the aftershocks of stopping it, and the surrounding plants shook greatly. In front of Kuroka who was frightened by my fist attack, I spoke.

"Don't make my cute kouhai cry."

"__"

“If you aim at Koneko-chan again, I won’t stop my attack next time. You may be a woman and Koneko-chan’s onee-san, but you’re my enemy!”

When I pulled back my fist, Kuroka immediately sprang back and put some distance between us.

“…You damn brat!”

Kuroka cursed me, but I saw the fear in her eyes. Since the armour I wore gave off a pressure that wasn’t normal. At times like this, the impact and intensity of this full body armour was quite effective.

Bikou laughed loudly when he saw that.

“Hyahahahahahahaha! This is really interesting! Now there are two dragon bosses! It’d be a lie to say I’m not enjoying this!”

Twirling his Nyoi-Bo staff around, Bikou showed his intention to continue fighting. This guy also loves fighting just like Vali! Really, why are my enemies only like this? There are much more enjoyable things than fighting. Like being popular with girls? Because our standards of value are different, I just can’t understand their thinking!

No matter how I think about it, rubbing Buchou’s breasts is much more enjoyable than fighting!

Well, it’s fine. Beating them here shouldn’t be a problem now. Since the poison mist from before had cleared up, Buchou and Koneko-chan seemed to be slowly recovering too.

With four against two, there’s nothing we can’t do! Soon, devils who noticed something strange was going on would come to help! —But, as we prepared ourselves, a tear appeared in the space before us! W-What was that!?

Appearing from out of the tear was—a man. A young man wearing a suit. He held in his hand a sword that was releasing a holy aura to the max. W-What’s with that sword…Is it a holy sword?

“That’s far enough, Bikou, Kuroka. The devils have noticed.”

Wearing glasses, the man said this to Bikou and Kuroka. A comrade!? Give me a break, another member of the [Khaos Brigade] is joining in on the battle!

Shutah.

Bikou descended from the sky.

“Aren’t you Vali’s attendant?”

The man pushed up his glasses and spoke.

“Because Kuroka was being slow, I came to see. And even Bikou is here. Geez, what are you two doing?”

The man sighed.

“Everyone, don’t get near that guy! The thing he’s holding in his hand is really troublesome!”

Tannin-ossan shouted that to us.

“The holy king sword Collbrande. Also known as Caliburn. For Collbrande, called the beyond strongest holy sword, to be with the Hakuryuukou is…”

Tannin-ossan gave a bitter laugh.

The beyond strongest holy sword!? So that means he’s stronger than either Kiba or Xenovia…?

“But, two swords? The one that’s in a sheath is also a holy sword, isn’t it?”

The man pointed at the sheathed sword on his back at ossan’s questions.

“This is the final Excalibur that was recently found, the strongest of the seven Excaliburs. [Excalibur Ruler].”

—! Excalibur!? The sword that was broken in ancient times and became seven pieces!? Certainly, I had heard that there was one

missing, but…Is that really it?

“To be talking like that, you’re pretty calm, aren’t you?”

The man nodded at Kuroka’s question.

“Yes, the truth is that I also have a lot of interest in the comrades of these guys. Sekiryuutei-dono, could you please give my greetings to the holy demonic sword user and the holy sword Durandal user? I’d like to face them sometime as fellow swordsmen—you know?”

—. What an audacious attitude. I wonder what Kiba and Xenovia will think when they hear of this.

“Now then, let’s retreat.”

The man then cut the air with the sword called Collbrande and another spatial tear appeared and spread out, one that several people could pass through.

“Goodbye, Sekiryuutei.”

The man left with just those words and the other comrades of Vali also disappeared into the spatial tear.

After that, we were cared for by all the devils who had detected trouble, and the Maou-sponsored party was hurriedly cancelled because of the [Khaos Brigade] attack.

Odin

“What a blunder.”

That was the first thing my Vice-Governor Shemhaza said in the conference room within the Maou’s territory.

While thinking “That’s an understatement” inside, I—Azazel drank some tea.

On the day of the Maou-sponsored party, the devils had received an attack from the [Khaos Brigade]. To put it accurately, it would be better to say that, “That was what the result became”.

That the SS-class exiled devil “Kuroka” who is wanted throughout the underworld would use a familiar to watch the party was outside of everyone’s expectations.

After that, Rias Gremory’s family and the ultimate-class devil Tannin came into contact with her. And drove her away.

The situation was settled with minimum damage, but—the breach into the party hall was making the other powers question the wariness of the devils.

Just as anyone could see, Shemhaza-kun from the Fallen Angels’ side and the Seraphs of the Angels’ side were angry. Well, I myself couldn’t say anything about them either. I also would never say that I, the Governor, was engrossed in cutting loose at a casino at the time either. Having the treaty violated right away was a grave matter. It was a serious problem.

Shemhaza reported more.

“The opponents were members of the [Khaos Brigade]’s independent special unit, the [Vali Team], consisting of Son Goku [Bikou], nekoshou [Kuroka] and also the user of the holy king sword Collbrande. That three people from a team of people endowed with tremendous power would come is… Also, the

management ability of the devils is—”

Ah, when this guy starts scolding, it takes a long while. Now we’re done for.

The incident had been taken under control. Rias and Koneko had been exposed to poison, but thankfully the detoxification had been completed right away and they only had a minor illness. Rather, since everyone was safe, it was a happy miscalculation that Ise had attained Balance Breaker. Everyone here seemed to understand in their hearts.

The Maou’s younger sister Rias was safe. The Sekiryuutei had taken the first step forward. The party had been canceled, but when looking at the big picture, it had been a big gain for us.

Far away from me, Tannin, who was attending in the form of a mini-dragon, and the other seniors were anticipating the battle between Rias and Sona Sitri that would be held soon.

“I’m going to cheer for Miss Rias. Since the Sekiryuutei I personally trained is with her. Kukuku, he’s an interesting kid. Poking breasts like that.”

“The knowledge that Azazel has brought seems to be bringing about a revolution in the Rating Games. If handled poorly, there may be a change within the high-ranked group within half a year.”

“That would be good. Since the top ten haven’t changed in the last ten-odd years. With this, it seems like we’ll be able to see some interesting games.”

Hahahaha, after finishing the arrangements, there was no air of tension here. Were the Three Great Powers really okay like this?

At that time—. The room’s door opened. The person who appeared there made everyone dumbfounded.

“Hmm. So you youngsters can’t greet an old man like me, huh?”

It was a one-eyed old man wearing an old-looking hat. He had a white beard, which was so long that it seemed to touch the floor.

His clothes, rather than being luxurious, also consisted of just a single robe. He held a walking staff, but he didn't have it because he hurt his lower back.

"—Odin."

Yes, this guy was actually the king god of all the Norse Gods—Odin! There was also an armour-wearing female warrior Valkyrie that had arrived along with him.

"Oh, oh, it's been a while, hasn't it, old geezer of the northern countryside?"

As I rudely called him that, Odin rubbed his beard.

"It's been a while, Fallen Angel brat. It seems you've become intimate with the people you fought with for so long, but… Are you still thinking of something crafty?"

"Hah! Unlike countryside gods that honour old-fashioned bonds according to conventional practices or whatever else, we young people have flexible thoughts. Rather than sticking to troublesome hostile ways of thinking, we place more value on growth and progress."

"That's a loser's mindset appropriate for the weak. After all, you're a gathering of brats that have lost their founding God and Maou."

This geezer… As usual, his mouth doesn't abate at all.

"It's called becoming independent and standing on our own, geezer."

"Seeing a bunch of brats doing a play meeting like this, I can't help but laugh."

Tch. At this rate, we won't come to a settlement. Sirzechs then left his seat and greeted the geezer.

"It's been a long time, King God of the North, Odin-dono."

"Sirzechs. I came here on the invitation you gave me to watch the

games. However, you've also had it hard. The descendent of the original Lucifer is now the Hakuryuukou. Moreover, he became a terrorist. The future of devils isn't going to be easy."

Odin made those sarcastic remarks, but Sirzechs simply gave a smile.

The geezer's gaze then shifted to Serafall sitting next to Sirzechs.

"By the way, Serafall. What's with that appearance?"

Serafall was dressed up as a magic girl like in Japanese television anime. This geezer is also a cosplay-lover, after all.

"Ara, Odin-sama! Don't you know? This is magical girl's outfit☆"

She turned sideways and posed with a peace sign. You're talking to the God of the North, you know?

"Hmm. So this is what's popular among the young people these days. Not bad at all. Yes, yes, quite nice."

Damn perverted geezer. While putting a hand to his chin, he looked down at Serafall's panties and legs.

There was a silhouette that intervened there. The aforementioned female warrior Valkyrie.

"Odin-sama, you mustn't do such indecent things! The reputation of Valhalla will cry!"

"Geez, you're so stuffy. That's why you can't get any heroes as a boyfriend."

The Valkyrie immediately broke into tears at Odin's words. Hey, hey, what's with her?

"A-At any rate, I'm just an aged female warrior with a history of no boyfriends! I too want to have a boyfriend! Auuu!"

Odin also sighed. Old man, one should only make a young woman cry when on a bed.

“I’m sorry. This person is my current assistant. Although she’s good-looking, she’s too stuffy. She can’t get a man either.”

I can’t understand how the geezer selects his staff. How can a person like that protect you? Well, it’s fine to quip about other people’s business. Odin then spoke to Sirzechs.

“I heard about it. Sirzechs, Serafall, your family members are fighting each other, right? Geez, making your precious younger sisters face each other even though they're close friends. You people are so bad. You really are devils.”

“If she can’t break through this much, then her hopes for her future as a devil won’t be born.”

“It’s already decided that my Sona-chan will win☆”

Each Maou-sama believed that their sister would win, after all.

Odin sat in an empty seat and spoke brazenly.

“Now then. The matter of the [Khaos Brigade] is all well and good, but I have come to watch the Rating Game. —When is the appointed date?”

The talk on the matter at the party was left for another day, and the topic shifted to the game that would soon be held. Lots of important people from each of the powers had been invited to watch the game, after all.

I stood up from my seat for a moment in order to take a break, and I went to rest on a sofa in the hallway. This discussion and conference with VIPs was making my shoulders stiff.

When I sat down on the sofa—Sirzechs appeared there. What’s with this, did he also slip out? He sat down next to me and spoke.

“Azazel, can I ask you one thing before the games starts?”

“What is it?”

“If you were facing Rias as an opponent, who would you definitely

remove among the Gremory group?”

“Ise, of course. Everyone in Rias’ team should feel it one way or another. —That Ise is the one who maintains the tension and spirits of the family.”

Tension was important in battle. It was often the case that the balance would crumble by a single change in that, and one side would quickly lose as a result. The reverse was also possible.

Ise was an emotional pillar for Rias and the others. The reason for that could also be understood. He always runs swiftly forward without giving up, no matter what it is or where it is. That behaviour of his also became the dynamic energy of the other servant devils in part. Even his master Rias depended on Ise.

—It was usual for a dragon to attract others.

Ise wasn’t an exception to that either. That was a result of people being attracted to the dragon that was lodged inside him as well. After all, he managed to get through a pinch with that power this time.

Sirzechs joined his hands together and spoke with a serious look.

“…Sona will aim for that.”

He was worried for his younger sister, huh. I spoke honestly.

“Yeah, the problem is when they remove him. Will their willpower rise, or will it fall? Since they had yet to see Ise as the [Sekiryuutei] taken down right before their eyes.”

Life 4: Buchou vs Kaichou: First Half!

Part 1

The night before the decisive battle with the Sitri family.

We gathered in sensei's room and had our last meeting.

There had been the attack by Bikou and Koneko-chan's onee-san, but the matter had been settled for the time being thanks to them being driven away by Buchou's group and Tannin-ossan, and things had already settled down concerning that incident now.

There was talk of Buchou gaining an even higher assessment and value thanks to that battle. Since Vali's team was repelled and she made me attain Balance Breaker. It seems that the points for these were high.

W-Well, it seems like she couldn't report to those at the top that I had attained Balance Breaker by poking her breasts, though. It was impossible for her to report it, after all…

So, we were having a meeting. Right away, Azazel questioned me who had attained Balance Breaker.

"Ise, how's the state of your Balance Breaker?"

"Yes. I've managed to get used to it, but there are several conditions to it."

I told my friend about those conditions.

I somehow was now able to use the Balance Breaker [Boosted Gear Scale Mail], but several conditions were attached to it, and I was still far from being able to use it freely.

"First, when I change into Balance Breaker, it takes time for the transformation to occur. The time until the transformation is displayed on my gauntlet's jewel. Moreover, when I have entered that waiting state, I can't use my Sacred Gear. Both doubling and transfer are impossible. Furthermore, I can only transform once per day, and even if I cancel the transformation before it ends, my

Sacred Gear will be deprived of almost all its power.”

Sensei nodded as I answered his question.

“Yeah, it’s just like the data says. It’s almost exactly the same as past Sekiryuuteis. Though there were also cases in which they could use the Sacred Gear even once they released their armour. So, what’s the time needed for the transformation in your case?”

“Two minutes.”

“So the time was shortened thanks to your training and getting used to it. However, those two minutes are a matter of life-and-death. To put it bluntly, it’s hardly useful in actual combat. Above all, the time until the transformation during which Boosted Gear can’t be used is just too painful. Since there are a large number of people that can defeat you within those two minutes. You have to think of how you can take care of yourself until you transform. Those two minutes are your greatest weakness.”

…He instantly repudiated my Balance Breaker right to my face. As expected of sensei. That’s why my objective was also easy to see now, though. What should I do during those two minutes until the transformation? Did I have no choice but to evade and run away?

“The normal Boosted Gear’s doubling and transfer are also important, since they have a wide range of uses. However, Balance Breaker is indispensable when fighting a powerful enemy. The normal state and the Balance Breaker State each have their advantages and disadvantages. So, for how long can you use Balance Breaker?”

“Yes, at full, I can use it for thirty minutes. When I use my power, it decreases more.”

“That’s pretty good for your first time limit. That’s the results of your training. However, in an official game, that is completely out. It’s out of the question if it’s just thirty minutes, and what’s more decreases as you use it more. There will also be games with long stretches of distance and time. We have no choice but to increase Ise’s time limit from now on.”

So the training I did still isn't enough. When will I be able to catch up to Vali?

However, Balance Breaker also depended on the time and situation. I had attained the power I wished for, but depending on the circumstances during battle, there would also be times when skilfully using the normal doubling and transfer ability would be better than using Balance Breaker.

I could use the transfer ability while in Balance Breaker as well, but the chances of me running low on gas would be quite high if I did use it. If I beat the enemy before I ran out of gas it was fine, but I couldn't guarantee that. Yeah, this really was difficult.

As I thought of all these things with my very lacking brain, sensei made a poking gesture with his hand with a lewd look in his eyes. I responded with a smile, and poked the air just as he did.

Seeing that, sensei offered his hand for a handshake. I accepted it!

Yes, sensei! I attained Balance Breaker by poking Buchou's breasts!

I silently communicated this to sensei! Both of us mutually filled with emotion, we returned to the conversation of the meeting.

"Rias, Sona Sitri knows about the Gremory group to some degree, right?"

At sensei's question, Buchou nodded.

"Yes, she understands us roughly. For example, she knows of Ise, Kiba, Akeno, Asia and Xenovia's main weapons. Video recordings of our battle with the Phoenix group were partly open to the public, after all. Furthermore, Gasper's Sacred Gear and Koneko-chan's background have also come to light."

"Well, she knows roughly about all of you then. So, how much do you know about her side?"

"I know the abilities of Sona, of her [Queen] the vice-president, and of several others of her servants. Though some of their abilities haven't been confirmed yet."

“So you’re at a disadvantage in that regard. Well, such a thing is fine for a game or an actual battle. That is often the case in both the games and in actual battles. There are also cases of a Sacred Gear evolving and transforming during battle. You should pay careful attention. The number of your opponents is eight.”

“Yes, one [King], one [Queen], one [Rook], one [Knight], two [Bishops], and two pawns, for a total of eight enemies. It seems she still doesn’t have a full set of pieces yet, but it's the same numbers as us.”

Iyaah, the conversation with sensei continued! Buchou also precisely listened to sensei’s comments.

Rather, so there were eight opponents. On our side, there were eight of us, including Buchou, Akeno-san, Kiba, Koneko-chan, Asia, Xenovia, Gasper and me. It was the same numbers…

Next, sensei wrote something on a white board he had prepared.

“The Rating Game classifies players into different particular fighting-types. Power, technique, wizard, support. Out of these, Rias is a Wizard-type. The type that is superior in magic in general, so to speak. Akeno-san is the same. Kiba is a Technique-type. He fights with speed and technique. Xenovia is a Power-type that excels in the area of speed. A player that aims for a one-hit-certain-kill. Asia and Gasper are Support-types. Also, if you classify them with even more detail, Asia is closer to a Wizard-type, while Gasper is closer to a Technique-type. Koneko is a Power-type. And lastly, Ise. You’re also a Power-type. However, you’re also good at being a Support-type as well. With your [Gift] power.”

I was bewildered by all these things that I suddenly had to learn and remember, but in other words there were various types within the families playing in the games. So I’m a Power-type that can also serve as support, huh.

Sensei drew lines to form a cross, and wrote the names of the four types within each of the four quadrants of the cross, thereby making a chart.

Our names were written on the chart according to location of type. I was located in the Power-type while being situated near Support. Kiba was located in Technique. Xenovia was in Power-type, and each of the other members was located somewhere else on the chart, thereby making a diagram illustration that was easy to understand.

When I looked at it like this, weren't we a pretty balanced group? We didn't have a Wizard-type that was also situated near Power, though. There was no [magic warrior] in our group.

Sensei suddenly circled me, Xenovia and Koneko-chan in the Power-types and spoke.

"The things that Power-types have to be most careful of are—counters. A troublesome class among the Technique-types. That is the counter-type ability. There are counter-types even among the Sacred Gears, but when fighting an opponent who carries one, power-types like Ise, Koneko and Xenovia can have their situations turned around by a single counter blow. It's because counters return the opponent's power to them plus the power of the one who counters. When one is strong, it's natural for there to be damage just as strong."

I-I see, it certainly is scary when your attack is returned to you. If the power of my Balance Breaker state in particular was countered, it would cause damage to not only me, but my friends as well.

"If there's a counter, I just have to overcome it with power."

Xenovia said that bravely. However, sensei shook his head.

"It's possible to overcome it with that, but it's another story when your opponent is a genius in that field. Avoid attacking as much as possible. It's better to face counter-users with the spell-user Akeno, the technique-user Kiba or Gasper with his special vampire abilities. Everything is a matter of compatibility. Power-types are simply strong. But the risk is big for them when fighting against Technique-types."

Xenovia was silent to sensei's explanation. Since Xenovia has an

abundance of battle experience, she was likely understood his meaning. Sensei turned to look at me.

“Ise, you have Balance Breaker now, but do you think you can win against Kiba?”

“…Speaking honestly, he would probably toy with me using his speed and receive no attacks.”

Those were my real thoughts. Certainly, I’ve attained the tremendous Balance Breaker. But, when asked whether I can win against Kiba, the answer is no. It’s impossible for me, who has just attained Balance Breaker, to win against Kiba, who has attained it since over a month ago. Most of all, the difference in our battle experience was great from the start.

The power I showed during the time with Vali was temporary. It was possible when I was enraged. The power of the usual me still wasn’t enough.

“That’s how it is. Whether it is against Kiba or anyone else, you have openings for counter-attacks. Ise, if you don’t create a counter-measure against counter-users, you won’t be able to win against Kiba for life. That is what battle compatibility means.”

Nuuh, so first I have to get past the wall of Kiba. If I can’t cross over that, I won’t be able to catch up to Vali, right?

Sensei spoke to Buchou.

“Rias, if there are counter-users in Sona Sitri’s group, they might run into Ise, you know? If a counter eats up his enormous power, it will be an instant out. You need to come up with and refine some tactics for that.”

“But, if the opponent is a female, the possibility of that is…low.”

Buchou, what do you mean? I wondered about that, but I soon knew the answer.

“…Dress Break. Since he’s the enemy of women, I don’t think they’ll want to fight him at all.”

Koneko-chan's sharp words! Ah! What a certain kill! I see, so I'm the enemy of women! Buchou was also nodding! So it was like that!

That's right, they wouldn't want to fight against an opponent who sends their clothes flying!

Rather, Koneko-chan, you seem to have returned to your old self. I'm glad. Because there was that thing the other day, I was worried. Did you possibly break through your problems instead?

But, that's a problem. To think I wouldn't be able to face women, even though I came up with a new technique during my training… Now that I've attained Balance Breaker, I think that it's possible. My new technique that's in another field than Dress Break—.

"By the way Ise, the fact that you attained Balance Breaker was noticed by people nearby during the attack of Bikou and the others. Sona Sitri should also know about it. You should be thoroughly careful. Since the possibility of you being crushed before you transform into Balance Break is high."

Sensei, you're that worried…I gave a bitter smile.

"Fuh. Don't worry. I'm an adult."

While putting my hand to my forehead, I responded with a nihilistic smile.

"What's wrong? Somehow, you were acting as if you've matured a lot?"

"Sensei. I'm an adult. Because I poked them."

Giving a thumbs up, I nodded vigorously. Yes, I have a special existence that has poked Buchou's breasts. I've climbed the stairs to adulthood.

"Ah, I get it, I get it."

Sensei, please don't talk that way. I have just gotten to this point.

"Kiba."

I put my hands on his shoulders.

“What is it?”

To the puzzled-looking Kiba, I told him words of gratitude with understanding eyes.

“There are two kinds of men. Men who have poked breasts, and men who haven’t poked breasts. I’m the former. It’s unrivalled. Incredible. I have crossed over.”

I thought that was the cleverest remark. Fufufu, Kiba. You’re a happy man. Since you can associate on equal terms with a man like me who has poked breasts.

Kiba gave a look of pity, and shook his head several times.

“…Buchou, this is no good. He needs to receive counselling before the game.”

Hmph. Since I’ve become a higher being, it seems that there are things we can no longer understand each other on. However, Kiba, that isn’t your fault. I’m the sinner for poking Buchou’s breasts.

Yes, I’m an evil sinner. From now on, I’ll introduce myself as [Darkness Welsh Dragon]. Fufufu.

“Ise-senpai is showing a strange smile…I’m scared…”

“…Gya-kun, don’t approach him, otherwise you’ll be infected with idiocy by being close to him.”

Gasper and Koneko-chan were giving me burning gazes, but… Fufufu, my charm is even understood by male girls and loli-kids…

Sensei closed his pen and said a final conclusion.

“I’d say that the chances of you guys winning in this game is over eighty percent. I do believe that you’ll win, but—I don’t believe you’ll win “for sure”. And the value of pieces isn’t absolute either. Like an actual game of chess, the value changes according to the situation on the board.”

Sensei continued. Everyone listened seriously and attentively. This person's words—had great effect. In the root of both the mind and body.

"I have lived a long time. In that time, I have seen a great variety of battles. That's why I will say this. —I have seen guys win despite having less than a ten percent chance of victory. Do not take even a one-percent chance lightly. Don't believe that you'll definitely win. However, think that you want to win no matter what. This is the last advice I can give to you all in this training camp."

That was the last advice sensei gave us this time.

After that, sensei discussed tactics with the members who had been left out in the conversation until the day of the decisive battle.

—We're definitely going to win!

Part 2

The day of the decisive battle—.

There was a huge magic circle underneath the Gremory castle for the exclusive use of transporting us to the game area.

Our group gathered on top of the magic circle, and prepared to transport to the game area, where the battle would soon be commencing.

Besides Asia and Xenovia, we were all wearing our Kuou Academy summer uniforms. Asia was in her sister clothes, and Xenovia was wearing her bondage-like battle clothes that she had worn the first time we met. Both of them seemed to be full of fighting spirit. And the Sitri side also seemed to be wearing their Kuou Academy uniforms.

Buchou's father, mother, Millicas-sama and Azazel-sensei spoke from outside of the magic circle.

"Rias, you've lost once before. Win for sure this time."

"Fight a battle that won't make you ashamed as the next head of the family. Everyone else as well, okay?"

"Do your best, Rias-nee-sama!"

"Well, I've taught you about the things you needed to be informed about this time. All that's left is to exert yourselves and go all out."

Sirzechs-sama and Grayfia-san weren't here, but they seemed to have already moved to a spectator's lounge for the exclusive use of VIPs. It was said that not only the leaders of the three great powers were present, but also VIPS from the other powers were invited. It seemed that sensei would be heading there after this.

Our game was getting a lot of attention… As expected, among the promising young devils, the fight between the two little sisters of the Maous was being basked in attention…

A feeling of tension floated in the air, but the magic circle mercilessly began to shine.

—At last, the game had begun!

The place we arrived at after jumping through the magic circle was —a place full of tables.

…This was a wide restaurant somewhere? When I thought that and looked at the surroundings, it seemed to be a dining floor, with fast-food restaurants surrounding the tables.

Was this also an exact replica of a real place, prepared in a space for our exclusive use? The power of devils was just as amazing as usual.

Huh? I feel like I've seen this place somewhere before… Things like the shop arrangement matched somewhere within my memories.

I stepped out from this floor a bit and looked around the interior. There—was a vast shopping mall there.

Familiar stores were lined up within the interior, and there was a glass-ceilinged atrium! Light spilled down through the glass.

This oblong shopping mall and this glass atrium! They were ones that I knew well!

"I didn't expect that the department store near Kuou Academy would serve as the stage."

Buchou said this as she came up next to me.

Yes, the game stage was the department store we often went to! At that time, we heard an announcement in the store!

[Everyone, I, the "Queen" of the Lucifer group, Grayfia, will be carrying the role of arbiter in the "Rating Game" between the Gremory group and the Sitri group on this occasion.]

Just like during the battle with Raiser, the announcer was Grayfia-san. But, wasn't her introduction slightly different from last time? That time she called herself a servant of the Gremory family, yet this time she clearly stated that she was part of the Lucifer group. Was it because the quality of the game was slightly different from last time…?

[In the name of my master, Sirzechs Lucifer, I will watch over the battle between these two families. It's a pleasure to be here. To get right to the main topic, the battlefield for today is the department store within the neighbourhood of the school "Kuou Academy" that Rias-sama and Sona-sama attend, which has been prepared within a separate space as the game field.]

Since the game field was once more somewhere that we were familiar with, you would think that it would make things easy for us, but the same goes for the Sitri group as well. Since they've also come to this department store many times.

This department store which had become our battle stage was a two-storied building. It wasn't that big in terms of height.

However, it was a long shopping mall across its two floors and the atrium, so it was considerably large horizontally. The rooftop was a parking lot. Besides that, there was also a multi-storey parking garage elsewhere.

[Both groups have been transported to their respective "bases". Rias-sama's "base" is on the second floor of the east side, while Sona-sama's "base" is on the first floor of the west side. In order for "Pawns" to promote, please go to your opponent's "bases".]

Our base and our enemies' base were on opposite ends of the department store. We were on the second floor's most eastern side. The opponents were on the first floor's most western side. Around our base, there was a pet shop, an arcade centre, a dining floor, a bookshop and a drugstore. On the first floor beneath our base, there was a branch store of a major second-hand bookshop company, and a sports-supplies shop.

Over on the opponent's side, there was a grocery shop, an electrical

appliance store, a junk food shop, and a general goods store.

During the battle, each side would have to respectively head towards the other end of the department. That was simple and clear, but it wouldn't go like that.

[This time, there will be special rules. Documents on this have been sent to each group, so please check them. A single bottle of the healing item "Phoenix Tears" has been provided to each team. Furthermore, the time to strategise before the battle is thirty minutes. Contact with the opponent during this time is forbidden. The game is scheduled to start after thirty minutes. Then, let the strategy time begin.]

After the announcement, everyone quickly gathered together. We couldn't waste even one minute of this time.

"The battlefield is modelled on the department store near Kuou Academy. So it's an indoor battle."

Buchou said this while looking at a guide map of the department store's interior that was depicted on the dining floor's wall. There was also a personal diagram of the place divided into chess squares in Buchou's hands.

We had encamped ourselves in the aforementioned dining floor and were planning out our strategy.

An indoor battle! So the Rating Game has that kind of battlefield as well!

I thought about how each side had a base on this certainly wide battlefield, and how we would have to run around within this field. It was like that during the House of Phoenix battle as well.

Rather, the stage was the department store near our school! This was a place we often came to on our way back from school.

More than ninety percent of the students attending Kuou Academy knew about the appearance of the store's interior. Me, Buchou and Asia have also come here on our days off. Buchou looked over the document with the special rule that had been sent to us.

“The rule this time states [Don’t destroy the department store which has become the battlefield]; in other words, we can’t do any showy battles.”

Buchou narrowed her eyes and seemed to be thinking about this rule.

“…I see, so to me, the fuku-buchou[25], and Ise, this is a disadvantageous battlefield. We can’t do attacks that affect a wide area.”

It was just as Xenovia said. By saying that it was an interior battle and furthermore that the building itself couldn’t be destroyed, I couldn’t use my Boosted Gear-raised Dragon Shot! The great fire attack that used doubled fire magic, which I obtained at great pains in the training with Tannin-ossan, was also impossible here! It would turn into a conflagration! Akeno-san also couldn’t use her extra-large lightning attack by creating thunder clouds unless she was on the rooftop, right? It seemed that, if she didn’t suppress her power, she could deal damage to the building as well!

Xenovia also wouldn’t be able to unleash her holy slashing wave with Durandal either. Even at the best of times, it was a sword that gushed out a holy aura even in its drawn state, so it couldn’t be recklessly swung in order to not break the rule.

“That really is troublesome. A battle of large mass attacks has been mostly sealed.”

Akeno-san put a hand against her cheek with a troubled face. She gave her opinion after letting out a sigh.

“Gasper-kun’s eyes also won’t be as effective. There are too many places to hide within the department store. All the goods and products have also been exactly reproduced, so there is an overflowing amount of objects to obstruct his vision. There is also the possibility of surprise attack in the dark…It’s troubling. This is a disadvantageous battlefield for our special characteristics. Because the Rias Gremory group’s forte is to battle showily, we’re completely sealed.”

Damn. I believed that we were strong, but everything has completely changed just because of this rule!

Buchou shook her head at Akeno-san's words.

"No, Gasper's eyes couldn't be used from the start. They put in a restriction on it here. [The use of Gasper Vladi's Sacred Gear is forbidden], it says. The reason is clear and simple. Since he still can't perfectly control it yet. They judged that it would be problematic if the entire game was spoiled by his eyes going out of control. Giving him Ise's blood is also prohibited. It seemed that they've provided him with Sacred Gear-sealing glasses developed by Azazel. [Since it was made for Gasper's exclusive use, it won't have any particular bad influence on his body]—so it says here. Really, he likes to prepare."

What another problem! So Gasper's Sacred Gear couldn't be used! Now that you mention it, I heard that Gasper's training didn't go well in regards to his Sacred Gear. He made a lot of progress, but it seems it will still take quite a bit of time for Gasper to master his eyes. Besides, I doubt it would be good even if he simply unleashed it.

"Then, will Gasper fight using magic and his vampire abilities?"

Buchou nodded at my question.

"That's right. From the beginning, his time-stopping power carried a lot of risk. The other side has not only the counter-types I mentioned before, but also Saji-kun, who possesses a Sacred Gear that absorbs the ability of others, so we don't know what kind of counterattacks they'll use. Like suppressing it with genjutsu. There are also other technique's to take away a person's vision. When talking about such things, it becomes impossible to use that power in either the games or actual battle. Using meticulous caution is only natural."

Vali also said the same thing as Buchou. That if you know that the ability activates from the eyes, it's easy to deal with it. Buchou continued. Ah, Gasper had put on the glasses right away.

“…The Rating Game isn’t something you can win simply by having a lot of power. The battle situation changes completely according to the battlefield and rules. Because this is a ground where even devils that lack strength can depend on wisdom and rise higher, it has become popular in the Underworld and among the other powers. The rules this time may be disadvantageous to us. However, if we can’t make up for this, we won’t be able to win and advance in the games from now on. [Even a “Pawn” can take down the “King]—this is not only a basic rule in chess, but also a proverb of the Rating Games. In other words, it implies that [anyone can win with the proper method].”

Akeno-san also approved of Buchou’s words and nodded.

“That’s right. There may be indoor battles like this on true battlefields as well from now on. If that were the case, we wouldn’t be able to completely display our power like today. This may be a good opportunity for us. Today’s battle is most suitable for getting used to indoor team battles.”

Among this discussion where all the smart people were talking, I timidly raised my hand.

“U-Umm, Buchou. While I desperately trained to attain Balance Breaker and raise my power, I didn’t practice holding back my power when fighting…”

“I know. This time, things came completely opposite from what we expected. Although the battlefield and rules are decided randomly, this game may be close to being the worst for Ise. Your power is too enormous. According to the rule, destroying the building means an instant out. However, there’s sure to be somewhere where you’ll be able to use Balance Breaker. But please hold back your power as much as possible while fighting. Don’t shoot your Dragon Shot as much as possible as well. The department store may be blown away. Please survive with just hand-to-hand fighting somehow…I’m sorry for asking such difficult things from you.”

“…Y-Yes. Rather, to be honest, I’m really worried, but…”

Seriously. As a Power-type, I was really at a disadvantage at a time

like this. Oh well. Since I'm aiming for the top and will be participating in the games from now on, I have to get used to this kind of battle as well.

…I cried at having to face so many difficult things. I had never imagined that the training I spent most of my summer on would have no meaning in this game! Now that I think about, Azazel-sensei also talked about it.

[Attaining Balance Breaker will certainly become a weapon for you. However, that's not something absolute in the games. There are devils with servants without Balance Breaker that manage to rise up, you know?]

I didn't really understand it then, but now I do.

With such a battlefield and rule, Balance Breaker wasn't always a knockdown technique!

While I fell into despair, Buchou continued her strategy plan.

"Even if we attack, the atrium of this shopping mall is a problem. You can grasp the progress of the opponent from both the first and second floors. It's the same for the other side."

Buchou said this while looking at the interior of the store. Akeno-san also expressed her opinion.

"I've considered an attack from the parking garage as well, but they would also be looking out for that too."

"Yes, it's the same for moving from the rooftop. Whether it be breaking through the centre, from the rooftop, or from the parking garage, we have to advance along these routes. Since we can't leave the department store itself."

"There should be cars in the parking garage as well. That's what I feel, after seeing that they reproduced even the merchandise and merchandise shelves. They may have copied the cars that were parked there."

The discussion between Buchou and her [Queen] Akeno-san had

somehow become really diligent. Yeah, this reconfirmed once again what the [Queen] was to the [King].

Kiba raised his hand and gave a proposal.

“Buchou, I’ll go look at the rooftop and parking garage. Since there are stairs nearby, I’ll go check them out.”

Buchou nodded.

“Please do, Yuuto.”

Kiba immediately headed out at a quick pace.

“Are the cars important somehow?”

I asked that question honestly. Why were they that worried about the presence of cars here?

“If they plunge into the store interior with a car, it’d be serious, you know? Besides, we have to openly consider the possibility that they’ll use the car itself as a bomb. Though I don’t think that someone like Sona would do something like recklessly driving inside the department store.”

So said Buchou. Ah, I see. She really is thorough about this. Everything on the battlefield can also become a weapon. When thought of like that, a car was a big weapon.

“You’re really cautious.”

“Naturally. I still feel like this isn't enough. It’s also possible for someone to rest and hide inside cars. Now that I think about it, we haven’t seen the inside of the staff room before. We should go check it…Even if we have Ise’s [Dress Break], there are many clothes in brand stores within the mall…Since it’s a department store, there are an endless number of things to consider.”

Buchou seemed to be considering even the minute details. She didn’t want to overlook anything.

Buchou then gave instructions to Gasper next.

“Gasper, please change into bats and fly to every location within the department store. In the opening of the game, you’ll inform us of the situation within the department store in detail.”

“R-Roger!”

Ooh, Gasper also had some fighting spirit. That’s right, to him, this is his first game.

The strategy-planning continued on after that as well and we decided on even the minute tactics.

Then, once half the time had passed since the strategy session started, we had solidified our plan.

Buchou looked around at us and spoke.

“The game will be starting fifteen minutes from now. We’ll gather here again in ten minutes. Everyone, please remain on standby with your respective methods of relaxing until then.”

At Buchou’s words, we all broke up and walked away. However, Buchou called out and stopped just me.

“Ise, since you attained Balance Breaker, the power of the eight [Pawn] pieces I placed in you have all been forcibly released.”

Yes, it was just as Buchou said. By attaining Balance Breaker, the power of the sealed pieces inside me had been released.

“With this, you may be able to completely use Ddraig’s power, but your body still can’t handle it. Ddraig should also save power in order not to break your body. Be careful. If you make a mistake with the Sekiryuutei’s power, the host’s body will be destroyed.”

“Yes! I’ll be sufficiently careful, Buchou!”

It had finally been released. One day, I’d like to be able to completely control Ddraig’s power. From the start, my value as a [Pawn] was almost completely made of Ddraig’s value.

The power flowing inside me is Ddraig’s power.

Being able to control Ddraig's power is my true value! I have to keep that in mind.

After that, Buchou entered a shop on the dining floor and began to pour herself some tea. So she was enjoying some tea until the time came. Gasper was eating donuts at a donuts shop.

Asia and Xenovia were talking about this and that in front of a hamburger shop. Kiba was rummaging through the drugstore beside the dining floor. I see, since it seems like medicines and the like were copied as well, he was trying to find things to take.

Everyone was trying to spend their time until the starting time with their own respective relaxing methods. So then, I as well—.

I left that place and entered the bookstore near the dining floor.

Gufufufu. Somehow, it was just like I thought! This bookstore was perfectly reproduced just like the rest of the mall! I went to the ecchi book corner, and looked for ero-books by myself inside the empty store! It's here, it's here! Amaziiiiiiiiing! I could read all these ero-books as much as I liked! So there were also nice battlefields like this! Ah, which should I look at! Was this the feeling of a treasure hunter who had found an amazing amount of gold and silver treasure? I could pick and choose as I like!

Was it possible for me to bring these all home? I want to take them home with me! Since I began living with Buchou and the others, my two bad friends and the boys in class have said that I didn't need ero-books.

That's not true! That's not true at all! That is that, this is this. Because, even if I lived with Buchou like this, I might be hated if I tried to make a move; on the other hand, not knowing what to do my on sexual desire as a healthy male high school student made me live in anguish every day.

Because of this, I had to vent myself everyday for the things I couldn't do with Buchou and the others. Ah, if I could make a harem, I could do ecchi things every day and I wouldn't need these kinds of books.

Until that day, I have to look at ero-books! Since Buchou and Asia were in my room, it was also difficult to read them.

In any case, I took out and read one of the books in front of me. Uhyoh! Breasts really are amazing. But, as I thought, when compared to Buchou's and Akeno-san's beautiful and big breasts, these ones still have a ways to go.

Fufufu, but, it was also spicy to look at the breasts within this ero-book while remembering the sensation of touching theirs.

"Ise-kun♪. What are you doing? Ara-ara, you're reading very dirty-looking books. It's the remaining time before the decisive battle, you know."

Munyuuuuuu.

I felt something with first rate softness on my back! It was breasts! Moreover, I remembered this sense of texture! And this voice! As I thought, it's Akeno-san!

She was clinging to me from behind and was checking out what I was reading from the side.

"A-Akeno-san! T-This is! I was just checking the extent to all the copied objects had been reproduced!"

That was a lame excuse even for me. But Akeno-san didn't seem angry, and just kept her sweet smile.

"Ufufu. I'm not particularly angry at you for this. I don't despise you for it either. Rather, I'm relieved at how Ise-kun this is."

Akeno-san is more tolerant about things like this than Buchou. Then, Akeno-san looked at the book I was reading with a serious expression.

"…I see, so Ise-kun likes this kind of thing…"

For some reason, her eyes really seemed serious… As expected, is the ecchi onee-san also very interested in ecchi books?

“A-Akeno-san?”

While I was troubled about her reaction, Akeno-san pointed at the actress photographed in the ero-book.

“Shall I wear something like this next time?”

The thing that Akeno-san was pointing at was—the cosplay costume for ecchi games that the actress wore! But, this was practically nude! The area covered by cloth is so small! You wouldn’t be able to put on underwear either!

“S-Seriously!?”

I reflexively asked that. Is this for real!?

“Seriously. Ufufu. Since it’s Ise-kun, it’s special.”

She replied with a smiling face! Amazing! Akeno-san will put on such an outfit! I had to seriously order this next time. I see, so ero-cosplay really existed…

This is bad. My delusions wouldn’t stop! This was nice, and that was also nice too…

While I was having non-stop delusions like this, Akeno-san embraced me from behind even tighter.

“A-Akeno-san, what are you doing?”

“…I’m getting courage from Ise-kun.”

Akeno-san had a painful voice. I was surprised at the sudden change.

But courage, huh. Now that I think of it, Buchou had also said that she was getting courage by grasping my hand during the meeting between the three great powers.

“…I need the courage to fight… Because I might have to use the other power that flows inside me this time, I’m scared. I hate it. That’s why, I’m getting courage from Ise-kun.”

Akeno-san… So she's resolved to use the Fallen Angel power that she hates.

It was a power, that she didn't wished, flow inside her. But, the circumstances that we were in here didn't permit that denial. —If she doesn't accept it, she can't advance forward.

It was something I didn't understand, but I thought that it was a very tough thing.

"If you're fine with me, please fully get courage from me!"

I grasped the hand of Akeno-san as she embraced me and spoke while smiling. If Akeno-san could gather courage from someone like me, it was the best.

"When I bring out my power of light, will you watch, Ise-kun? If Ise-kun is watching, I will be able to use it."

"Y-Yes! If Akeno-san can display her power just by me watching, it's a small price to pay!"

"…I'm happy. If I'm together with Ise, surely… You belong to Rias, but even so I will always… by your side…"

Akeno-san seemed to say something in a low voice that I couldn't hear.

Akeno-san moved away from my back. But, her eyes were moist—. Suddenly, Akeno-san brought her face close to mine this time—. A-Akeno-san's lips were—.

"…Ise-senpai, it's almost time to gather."

When mine and Akeno-san's lips were just about to touch, Koneko-chan unexpectedly appeared!

Uaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah! W-W-We were seeeeeeeeeeen!

This is bad! This is bad! Just a little more and I would have seriously kissed Akeno-san!

Because! Because, it's Akeno-san's lips! They were incredibly attractive! But if Buchou learned of this, I would be killeeeeeeeeeeeeed!

If I, her servant and pet, become intimate with someone else, she would destroy me!

"K-Koneko-chan! This is, umm!"

I tried to come up with an excuse while being flustered, but Koneko-chan just sighed with half-closed eyes.

"Ara-ara, Koneko-chan. You saw us. Ufufu. Ise-kun, thank you. I'm already okay now."

Akeno-san returned to her usual pleasantly smiling face, and tried to leave this place.

However—.

"…Next time, for sure… with you…"

She left behind some kind of whisper. Her expression as she left seemed regretful at having to part.

No, it was my mistake. Akeno-san was surely just trying to approach me in S-mode.

As I nodded with certainty on that—Koneko-chan grasped my hand.

"K-Koneko-chan?"

I was surprised by Koneko-chan's sudden action, but she spoke while blushing red.

"…Please give me courage too."

—.

I see. This girl was also going to try using the power she had suppressed until now. Her hand was trembling. She was very scared. She feared that her nekomata power might swallow her up

—.

“Sure. If you’re fine with me.”

I grasped her hand back with a smiling face.

If Akeno-san and Koneko-chan could obtain the courage to get over their problems by holding someone like me, it was a small price to pay.

“…Ise-senpai, aren’t you afraid of me, as a nekomata?”

Koneko-chan asked me this with an anxious expression.

“No, not at all.”

I answered calmly. Eh? Why would I be afraid of Koneko-chan? Rather, how could I be bothered by her lovely cat-ear form? I knew her circumstances, but I couldn’t see a reason why I should be afraid of Koneko-chan.

Hearing that, Koneko-chan looked completely astonished. But, her face looked down.

“…Before the training began, I said something horrible to Ise-senpai.”

Ah, so it’s about the time I spoke care-freely and Koneko-chan got angry.

“You don’t have to worry about that. I was also at fault then. Although I didn’t know your circumstances, I—was an inconsiderate senpai.”

“That isn’t true.”

Koneko-chan grasped my hand harder.

“…I’ll use my nekomata power.”

“—!”

I was surprised by Koneko-chan’s words.

“…I hate what nee-sama became. But as things are now, I may not be able to be useful to everyone. That’s why, I’ll use it.”

She had a resolved look. So she overcame her problem when she met with her sister and declared that she would break off her relationship with her.

“Koneko-chan, you’ll surely overcome your nekomata power in the future and someday become a hell cat.”

“…Hell cat?”

“Yes, it’s written as “cat of the underworld” and read as hell cat[26]! Like this!”

Though it was a method of encouragement even I wasn’t sure about, I declared further!

“I’ll declare this to Koneko-chan too. Even if you run out of control with your nekomata power, I’ll stop you. I want to use this Sekiryuutei power not only for myself, but for my friends too. And even if that scary onee-san comes again, I’ll definitely save you. Since I’ll blow away that nee-chan with a punch, you don’t need to be scared.”

That was my best encouragement. Because I’m unfortunately an idiot, I couldn’t give any smarter words than this. That’s why, if it comes to it, I’ll risk my life and save this girl.

“…You really are a gentle Sekiryuutei.”

She seemed to murmur something, but I didn’t hear it. I think I heard “gentle”, but…

By the way, your cheeks were a deep red, Koneko-chan. Why? Was I making an ero-face again?

Part 3

—It was the appointed time.

We had gathered at the dining floor and were waiting for the starting time.

Then, an announcement streamed through the store.

[It is now time to begin. Furthermore, the time limit for this game will be a blitz-style of three hours. Then without further ado, game start.]

Game start!

Wait, blitz!? So they decided that to give it a short time limit! So there were also cases like this! So this is why they gave us strategy time before this. It was because they change the rules every time, huh. The Rating Games are profound. Buchou stood up from her seat and spoke with an expression filled with fighting spirit.

“Your instructions are just as we agreed on before. Ise and Koneko, and Yuuto and Xenovia will split into two separate groups. Ise and Koneko will advance through the store interior. Yuuto and Xenovia will advance forward via the parking garage. Gasper will transform into many bats and do surveillance and reporting inside the store. According to the condition of your progress, me, Akeno and Asia will go by the route of Ise’s group.”

We listened to Buchou’s instructions and we fitted communication-use microphones in all of our ears.

“Now then, my cute servant devils! We won’t lose again! This time, we’ll win!”

[Yes!]

Everyone was filled with fighting spirit. Naturally! We can’t lose like that again! We’ll win! For sure!

“Then, Xenovia, let’s go.”

“Yes, Kiba.”

Kiba and Xenovia headed out first. They rushed out from the dining floor and headed down the path that connected to the parking garage. According to Kiba, it was confirmed that there were cars in the parking lot. However, they seemed to be mere imitations. So charging using the car was apparently impossible.

Now then, we were next to leave after Kiba and Xenovia.

“Koneko-chan, let’s go.”

“Yes.”

Me and Koneko-chan left that place behind and headed out. Koneko-chan had already told everyone that she would use her power.

Buchou’s reading was this. She predicted that the enemy would read our movements as following.

I would burst into the base while avoiding battle as much as possible. In order to promote myself to [Queen].

The quick-witted Kiba and Xenovia would move together and go around back through the parking garage to the base. There they would disturb the enemy’s formation and attract the attention of the enemy. In order to promote to [Queen], they would quickly distract and lead the enemy away from their base. When I became [Queen], everyone would temporarily pull out and then attack once again. Buchou would also move out at this time.

In any case, making me the Sekiryuutei promote to [Queen] was considered most important—or so it would seem.

Buchou assumed that Kaichou would read us like this, and so did the opposite instead.

I was moving forward just as Kaichou would predict. They would also receive an attack. But, our true main offence was Kiba and

Xenovia. It wasn't a diversion, but a genuine attack. Instead, I would be the feint.

Since the opponent would aim at me and send out several assassins, Buchou predicted that the area around the [King] would be short-staffed. Of course, assassins would also be sent after the parking garage group, but we expected that it wasn't secured that much and would be assaulted by Kiba and Xenovia.

Meanwhile, we would aim at the [King] and claim checkmate!

The tactic for using my Sekiryuutei power was different. This time, I wasn't playing an active Power-role. Since I was a first-most member of Buchou's family. I have to combine my power with everyone else's.

"Ise, good luck."

"Ise-san! Do your best! Don't lose!"

"Ufufu, I expect to see your cool side."

Buchou, Asia and Akeno-san all had high expectations of me! Uooooh! I have to show my good side! Wait, even if I fight, they'd only be able to see it later from the recorded videos…

Me and Koneko-chan advanced at a subtle pace that was neither quite running or walking.

Since sound echoed in the store interior, the opponent would be able to judge our distance from them if we ran. Moreover, the store interior was a horizontally long shopping mall that extended in a straight line towards both ends. We had no choice but to advance while concealing ourselves beneath cover.

Well, even if we called it a big department store, it wouldn't take even ten minutes to walk from end to end. We moved while being attentive of that.

…Hmm. There were no enemies in sight. Five minutes had already passed since the game began, but because we were moving forward while being on alert, we'd only progressed through a quarter of the

place.

We appeared to be evading battle, while we were actually acting as a diversion. I was nervous.

Then, next to me, Koneko-chan—grew cat ears on her head!

Those ears moved with a PIKO-PIKO! What's more, she even grew a tail! What deadly cuteness! Strange. I was this excited!? Even though I didn't have a loli-fetish, did I have a beast loli-fetish!? Koneko-chan's nekomata-mode was deadly cute!

Koneko-chan pointed somewhere far away with her finger and spoke.

"…They're moving. There are two people straight ahead moving towards us."

"You can tell?"

"…Yes. Because I released a part of senjutsu in my current state, I can read the flow of spirit fairly well. Naturally, I can't grasp the fine details of it, but…"

I see. But, were those cat ears like sensors? How incredibly handy.

This is the senjutsu which can read the spirit of one's entire surroundings! Thinking about it, nekomatas can understand everything that happens to a certain degree through smell, after all. Since she's a cat, her nose was better than devils like me with a human base.

"…How long until we meet up with those guys who are heading towards us?"

"…At this pace, most likely within ten minutes."

—Ten minutes, huh.

We had better prepare ourselves. Should I use my Sacred Gear normally? Or should I use Balance Breaker? I wavered between them, but I still didn't know what kinds of abilities the opponents'

had.

My strong point was—my simple physical strength that I prided myself on. I barely had any magic. Even if I increased my magic power with my Sacred Gear, I would quickly run out of gas…Even if I had strong power, if I mistakenly used it, I would instantly lose!

…I was always in a dangerous situation. I had to bear at least that in mind.

Koneko-chan was looking at me seriously. Was it my imagination that her cheeks were red?

"…No. Ise-senpai wears a warrior's face when it's important. Even though you usually have a lewd look…"

…Seriously? Did I really have that kind of lewd face normally? W-Well, it's because I'm having erotic delusions everyday, after all…

As I was touching my face with my hand—.

"—!"

Koneko-chan suddenly looked up at the ceiling ahead of us.

"…Above!"

What, what? As I followed the gaze of the surprised Koneko-chan—.

Stretching straight up to the ceiling was a rope—no, a line! Descending from the ceiling using that Tarzan-like rope was—.

"—Hyoudou! The first attack is ours!"

It was Saji! He prepared to attack me while positioning himself for a knee kick! Moreover, there was someone on Saji's back!

I quickly guarded using my gauntlet as a shield!

Dogon!

The impact of the combined force of the momentum of their fall + the kick + the weight of two people was transmitted to my body

through my gauntlet!

My stance shook from the force of the attack, but I somehow recovered and I prepared to advance on the—enemy in front of me.

“Yo, Hyoudou.”

Saji had appeared. Next to him, the one who had been riding on his back was—a girl. A member of the student council, huh. I think she was a first-year student. She often acted together with Saji from behind him.

Saji’s right arm—had a black snake wound around it several times. Its shape was different from before! There had just been a deformed lizard head there before. Did his Sacred Gear change!? …Wait, there was a black snake wound around my gauntlet on my left arm as well, and it was connected to Saji’s Sacred Gear. He must have put it on me when he attacked before!

There was also a line connecting to my right hand, but…it wasn’t connected to Saji’s Sacred Gear. Rather, it seemed to be tied to something far away. Was this line connected all the way to the enemy base?

It was weird, but it didn’t feel like my power was being sucked away.

Saji noticed that I was looking at his Sacred Gear, and spoke while smiling bitterly.

“Well, I did some training. The result of that is this. So, when I had stuck a line in the ceiling and rose up in order to observe the store interior from above, I saw two people hiding under cover further away. Since you didn’t notice me, I used that brief chance to do a Tarzan attack.”

I see. So that’s how you arrived here. Yeah, I understand somehow.

If I had gotten here first, I would have done the same to you. I understand somehow.

You also think that, right? Hey, Saji.

We're similar, you and I. From head to toe, we're similar. When it comes to our lewdness, our earnestness towards our masters, our idiocy, and our tendency to plunge straight forward only.

We really are too similar. That's why I understood it right away. That you and I will fight today.

"I also trained. I spent almost all my summer vacation being chased by a dragon!"

Sorry, Saji. I will beat you and advance forward. Winning today is what's most important for us.

I have to get closer to Vali. He will aim at me at some point. At that time, he may cause harm to Buchou, Asia and the others.

For the sake of preventing that, I will become strong! I can't stop at a place like this!

Yes, at that moment when I was filled up with fighting spirit. An unbelievable announcement reached the ears of me and Koneko-chan.

[One of Rias Gremory-sama's "Bishops", retired.]

—! What!? Which one! Hadn't the game just started!? Asia was with Buchou, so—. Saji grinned.

"The one that was taken out is most likely Gasper-kun."

…Gasper was taken out? That was too fast, wasn't it? Wasn't he transformed into bats and moving around the inside of the store for the sake of surveillance?

"Gasper was caught."

Saji continued as I thought dubiously.

"We were contacted and told that Gasper-kun's Sacred Gear was sealed according to the rules. As such, it was inevitable that he would use his vampire powers instead. [He will change into bats and observe the situation within the store]. This is what Kaichou

thought. So we utilised our base."

Your base? That was the grocery store. Saji continued further.

"First, one of our members moves suspiciously at the Sitri base. Then, Gasper-kun who was doing surveillance would naturally be interested and follow them, you know? Then, when we showed more suspicious behaviour, he would call the other bats he had launched and start to observe with several of them. When all the many bats had gathered, that's when it happened. If something happens to the bats when all of them are gathered, they revert back to Gasper's body. Near the place where the bats had assembled together was—garlic, a vampire's greatest dislike. Our base is a grocery store on the first floor of the west side. There were large quantities of garlic left there. It was easy to catch Gasper with that."

So they captured and took him out while he was incapacitated by the smell of garlic! No way! So there was such a way to deal damage to him!

"It's pretty simple, right? But even if I say that, this method of taking him out won't work again. Kaichou said that, no matter how much training he did, he still wouldn't be close to overcoming his aversion to garlic yet. It was a lucky coincidence that we had a base at such a location, but even so, a defeat is a defeat."

…So you're saying it was his blind spot? No, no matter how effective it is on you, you should be able to withstand garlic to a point, Gaspeeeeeeeeeeeeer! From the start, that joke is too overdone already!

Gya-suke! After this, we're doing practice to make you overcome garlic! I'll replace your normal food with garlic rice and garlic toast! You can't just withdraw from the front lines without doing sufficient surveillance!

Having gotten mad, I tried to activate my Sacred Gear, but—.

[Partner, doubling is dangerous. Now that you're connected to that guy's Sacred Gear, you'll have part of your power stolen by him if you double.]

—! That's right, Saji's Sacred Gear has the ability to suck in energy from the thing it is connected to. Now that my Sacred Gear and his Sacred Gear are connected, doubling is dangerous!

[To detach this line, you have no choice but to blow it away by using the after-shocks from activating Balance Breaker.]

Damn it! My hand was forced right from the outset! —I'll activate Balance Breaker and blow away this line!

"Start!"

[Count Down!]

The time until Balance Breaker was displayed on the jewel and the count had begun. Now that it's like this, I can't use my normal Sacred Gear abilities! I couldn't use either doubling or transfer until I transformed into Balance Breaker!

For two minutes, I had no choice but to evade Saji's attacks!

This was a short, decisive battle. We'll use the momentum of activating Balance Breaker to continue on all the way to the [King]! And the likely candidates for doing that were Kiba and Xenovia. I'll act as a diversion and attract the enemy here!

In order to get some distance, I tried to temporarily draw back from here, but—I was pulled by the line and lost my balance! As I thought, Saji's Sacred Gear really is troublesome!

"Are you running away, Hyoudou!?"

In an instant, the space between us was shortened and—Don! A kick was delivered to my abdomen!

Gahoh! My upper body was pulled down by Saji's kick. But, I had already put strength into my abs and avoided the worst of the damage. Hehehe, it's because I properly did my basic training. I had confidence in my abs!

"Heh, even though I kicked quite seriously there. You also seem to not have done incomplete training."

Having not given the damage he had thought he would, Saji smiled bitterly.

It's impossible to run away here! Then, I'll just attack from the front!

I gave up on getting some distance from Saji and suddenly headed towards him! I wasn't that good at fist-fighting with my body, but I had accumulated plenty of basic training! I had made a body just for the sake of close combat! All that's left is to believe in my own body!

I clutched my fist and tried to strike at Saji, but—. Saji fired a line at me from his right arm! Does he intend to suck away my power!? I was on guard, but the line went passed me and attached itself to a certain store's light.

"Nimura! Put on the sunglasses we got at that store just before!"

Saji and Saji's kouhai took out sunglasses from their pockets and put them on! What were they—. Just as I wondered this, I immediately understood the meaning behind it.

Kah!

The store lighting issued a blazing light and burned me and Koneko-chan's vision! Damn it! They've blinded us!

[They got you. He caused a burst of light for just an instant by connecting his line to the light and sending magic power into it.]

Don't explain it so calmly, Ddraig! It's no good! I can't open my eyes—.

Dogon!

"Guhah!"

Once again, I received an impact in my abdomen! Because I didn't strengthen my abs this time, I received the damage completely! Then, while my body was hunched over, I received another blow from Saji to my back!

Ooooooooooow! The pain was welling up inside me, and then my jaw—.

Bagan!

An uppercut-like attack from Saji sharply shot through my jaw!

From such a considerable impact, I fell face-down on the floor.

…Kuh…He got me. He had completely stolen the beginning… Moreover, he gave me considerable damage.

My teeth rattled from the impact to my jaw. I had also gotten a cut in my mouth from it. The taste of blood spread within my mouth. My eyesight was restored and—. While still face down on the ground, I looked up and…

I saw Saji point his hand at me and trying to fire a magic bullet at me! He intended to deliver the finishing blow right away! I quickly got up and rolled over to the side!

Don!

A big hole was made in the floor from the magic blast he fired! What power! It was completely a finishing blow move! It's dangerous! I was going to exit the stage before I activated Balance Breaker. I wouldn't be able to say anything about what happened to Gasper then!

"…Not bad, Saji."

"Hyoudou. I'm serious. I'm going to seriously defeat you, the Sekiryuutei."

—. Saji's eyes were filled with resolution. I could tell that his seriousness was tremendous.

Then, Saji raised his hand and tried to fire another magic blast.

Don!

He fired another high-volume mass of magic! The size of it wasn't

considerable, though. Mostly like, he was following the rule that said that not to damage the building as much as possible.

But, the attack was powerful enough to take down an opponent like me!

I dodged, and the store I was standing at before was destroyed by the blast of magic.

However, how did Saji create such an attack? I had heard that he had low magic like me. Yet, how was he able to release such power?

At that moment, I opened my eyes widely. Because Saji's Sacred Gear had its line connected to his chest— to his heart.

—The source of Saji's continuous attacks was his life-force!?

"Saji! You! Are you converting your own life-force…into magic power!?"

"That's right. With my low magic, this is the only way for me to shoot powerful attacks. I convert my life-force into magic power using my Sacred Gear's ability. It's just as you see. I'm [risking my life], as it were."

"Do you really intend to die…!?"

Saji—smiled with a serious look.

"Yeah, I intend to die. I intend to beat you with the intention of dying. —Do you understand our frustration, having our dream laughed at! Do you understand our desperation as we believe in our dream? This battle is being broadcast across the entire Underworld. We have to show the seriousness of the Sitri group in front of those guys that laughed at us!"

Suddenly, I remembered that scene.

—Yes, this is similar to the time where I marched into Buchou's engagement party.

I didn't consider my own life and simply poured my first into rescuing Buchou. I just thought of helping Buchou, even if I died. This battle overlapped with that scene.

Saji, you're the same as me from back then.

As me and Saji were going through a fierce battle of dodging and drawing near at that time, Koneko-chan and Saji's kouhai had started attacking and defending against each other next to us.

Koneko-chan was superior in hand-to-hand fighting. Even so, though, the female opponent was hanging on well and the battle was intensifying.

However, after Koneko-chan's fist grazed her opponent's cheek, a change occurred. The body of Saji's kouhai shook just a little. Her eyes also seemed to be swimming just a bit. Did she receive damage from the shockwave of Koneko-chan's fist?

Koneko-chan didn't miss the opening! She clad her fist in a pale white aura and drove it into her opponent's chest!

Bang!

A good-sounding noise rang through the surroundings. At that instant, Saji's kouhai dropped to her knees!

“…I drove a fist clad with spirit energy into you. Since damage was also dealt to the blood vessels flowing inside you at the time, you won’t be able to build up magic anymore. Furthermore, the damage also pierced through your insides…You can’t move anymore.”

So said Koneko-chan!

Sensei had said this before.

[Koneko's true fighting style, which mixes senjutsu and hand-to-hand combat, will certainly become a weapon. An attack that not only deals damage to the opponent's body, but also their blood vessels that circulate within their body will break the enemy's aura from its foundation. However, if she becomes consumed by power, she must stop using it immediately. Senjutsu can read and handle spirit energy, but it also takes in the malice and ill will that floats in the world. Koneko's sister became like that because she absorbed too much malice as well.]

This was Koneko-chan's fist shot! She fired a blow filled with spirit energy. It dealt external damage, of course, but its main destructive power was—the damage it dealt within the body! It sent spirit energy that was charged within her fist into the opponent's body and dealt damage to their internal organs!

Even if the damage from the punch itself didn't penetrate, as long as the fired spirit energy destroyed their interior—the effect was enormous!

So I saw in some book. I wasn't trained in internal organs!

A punch that dealt damage to the interior! So this was the attack that Koneko-chan had sealed. If she uses it well, she may be the servant with the most effective attack among us.

"…Saji-senpai, I'm sorry."

After she let just those few words leak out, the kouhai's shone and she disappeared from here. She had retired and been transferred away because she had sustained serious damage.

[One of Sona Sitri-sama's "Pawns", retired.]

We heard another announcement. With this, each team had lost one person.

"…I have become a hellcat. I won't lose!"

Now then, since Koneko-chan has decided while looking cool, I have to exert myself as a senpai as well!

However, I was having a hard time with just dodging Saji's magic bullets. I would receive considerable damage if those even grazed my body. With that much magic power loaded into them, it was quite considerable stuff. It was literally with his spirit and soul!

"Haahaa…Haahaa…"

But, Saji's exhaustion from repeatedly firing that magic was also quite severe. He won't be able to keep it up!

"…Ise-senpai, I'll help."

Koneko-chan tried to come over.

"No, Koneko-chan. Please let me do this just between me and Saji."

When I refused her help, Koneko-chan shook her head.

"That's no good. This is a team battle. Let's work together."

"Yeah, it's just as you say, Koneko-chan. But, while he was fighting against me, Saji didn't make any direct attacks on Koneko-chan. If he wanted to, he could have attached the line to Koneko-chan and sucked up your power. Why do you think he didn't do that even so?"

Koneko-chan couldn't answer my question, but Saji answered it while giving a complacent smile.

"…Sorry, Toujou Koneko-chan. I want to win against Hyoudou, against the Sekiryuutei one-on-one. Didn't I tell you? Our dream is serious. We will build a school. We will construct a school without discrimination in the Underworld. And I will become a teacher… That is my dream…This battle is being broadcasted across the entire Underworld. That's why this has meaning. I, a [Pawn]! Will win against the same [Pawn], Sekiryuutei Hyoudou Issei!! I will defeat the Sekiryuutei! I'll win and say it boldly! That I will become a teacher!"

Saji was serious. His gaze was strong and had neither shadow nor gloom anywhere in it.

I also spoke to Koneko-chan.

“And that’s how it is. If I just run away from his challenge, I’d be uncool, right? If I don’t do it—. That’s why, I have to do it. Because I’m his friend, I have no choice but to fight him seriously. I have to do it! Otherwise, I won’t be able to show my face to Buchou!”

Yes, we were similar. From head to toe, we were similar. —We’re both unskilled idiots.

After hearing that, Koneko-chan put away her fist and got some distance away from us.

““Thank you.””

Me and Saji thanked Koneko-chan at the same time.

But, why did Saji connect a line to not only my Sacred Gear, but also me directly on my right arm?

[He wants to prevent your Sacred Gear’s doubling ability from being restored and then flowing into him at the same time as he sucks away your own power. He knows that, if he sucks away both your own power and the Sacred Gear’s power at the same time, his body won’t be able to take it and will blow up. He plans to stop the Balance Breaker countdown and return you to your normal form instead.]

What a complex Sacred Gear!

“—This is going nowhere, huh.”

As Saji sighed, he gathered a mass of magic power unlike anything until now between his hands! What size! It will affect the entire surroundings!

As I felt that, that magic power was compressed and shrunk. Then, a magic bullet the size of a softball was created between Saji’s hands.

“With this, it won’t affect the surrounding area, and it will completely destroy just your body.”

Having made that, Saji—was already breathing heavily. An attack filled with all his might. That was what he had created.

He intended to kill me with that. Saji smiled a bit.

“I was jealous of you. The pride of your master and senpai. The Sekiryuutei. Everyone knows about you. But, even though I’m the same [Pawn] as you, I have nothing. Nothing! That’s why, I obtained pride and self-confidence. I will kill you, the Sekiryuutei!!”

That was Saji’s yell. I didn’t know. To think that he saw me like that…

But, I—will overcome your dream! I had my own, Buchou had her own dream! For the sake of fulfilling, we will risk our lives, together!

Tooon!

Saji finally shot the attack filled with all his might! I tried to avoid it, but—.

Saji released the line that was attached to my Boosted Gear on his end and then fired it towards my foot!

My Boosted Gear and the floor at my foot were tied to each other by the line! I tried to pull it off, but the line was too firm and hard, and I couldn’t get the Booster Gear free from the floor!

This is bad! At this rate, I won’t be able to avoid the approaching magic bullet! Balance Breaker would activate in just a little more, but it still wouldn’t be in time!

I had no choice but to resolve myself! The magic bullet hit me!

Dooooooooooooooooooooooooon!

The moment it hit, the magic bullet burst open and its aura spread throughout the surroundings!

At that instant.

[Divide!]

A white gauntlet appeared on my right arm and caught Saji's attack.

…I received half of the damage. But, the other half was annihilated by the Hakuryuukou's power. My body couldn't endure anymore… But, I won't receive any more damage!

"—! My magic bullet was halved!?"

Saji was shocked.

"I was able to tentatively activate this power during my seclusion in the mountains. But, it has several conditions. First, the chances of activating it are less than ten percent. This is close to a gamble. Second. This also requires resolution. It's my life-force. Regardless of whether the activation succeeds or fails, my life-force is shaved off when I try to use it. It's a pretty scary gamble, isn't it?"

My gamble had succeeded. But my life-force was shaved off. With its duty complete, the white gauntlet immediately disappeared from my right arm. I can still use it, but I was unable to keep it materialised.

However, thanks to that, it's complete. The Boosted Gear's countdown—was finished!

"I'm also risking my life. I can't stop at a place like this. Let's goooooooooo! Shine! Boosted Geaaaaaaaaaaaaaaar!"

In response to my cry, my Sacred Gear's voice rang out!

[Welsh Dragon Balance Breaker!!!!!!!!]

A dazzling red and extra-large aura surrounded me and changed into armour.

At the same time, overflowing power welled up inside me.

—About ten minutes had passed since the game began.

I was wearing the [Boosted Gear Scale Mail].

Waltz

It had been several minutes since the game had begun. I—Kiba, and Xenovia entered the multi-storey parking lot.

We advanced forward while cautiously looking through the dimly-lit parking lot. Because we had both encountered a lot of spies in our missions, moving forward like this was our strong point.

I walked in front, and then, after I confirmed that there was no one hiding under cover ahead of us, I called back to Xenovia behind me for her to move forward as well. We repeated this many times and gradually advanced through the parking lot.

The plan was to descend down the car passages on the second floor and go down to the first floor. The elevator was also functioning, but we feared being attacked while we rode it down.

We had no choice but to advance with the most reliable method.

We advanced down the passage from the second floor and set foot on the first floor of the parking lot.

—There was a silhouette before us.

Looking closely, it was a glasses-wearing girl with long black hair —.

I knew her. Kaichou's [Queen], the "vice-president of the student council", Shinra Tsubaki-senpai. She held a naginata[27] in her hand.

That's right, I had heard that she was a naginata-user. And she held a considerably high-rank with it as well.

"How do you do, Kiba Yuuto-kun, Xenovia-san. I knew that you would come here."

Shinra-senpai spoke indifferently. There were two girls at her side —. A girl with a tall figure and a slender girl carrying a Japanese

sword.

The tall girl was called Yura-san. A [Rook]. The girl holding the Japanese sword was called Meguri-san. A [Knight].

Yura-san excelled in hand-to-hand combat techniques, while Meguri-san was a member of a clan that made their living on the extermination of evil spirits.

I see, so you stationed three people at the parking lot, Sona-kaichou. She read us well. She had secured this place… She predicted that we would be the ones most likely to attack.

Xenovia unsheathed the sword that she carried on her back and I also produced a holy demonic sword in my hand.

Xenovia didn't use Durandal. With that special rule, she wouldn't be able to act well with Durandal. Since its power couldn't be controlled, it would recklessly destroy the building.

[Rias Gremory-sama's first "Bishop", retired.]

—! The defeat of one of our comrades was heard from the announcement. It was difficult to think that it was Asia-san. I didn't understood how it happened, but Gasper had likely been taken out.

"How calm you are."

Shinra-senpai said that.

"Yes, since I won't be able to endure if I don't get used to something like this."

I responded extremely calmly. Inside, though, my heart was seething. Because even I felt the frustration and regret in losing a friend.

Gasper-kun. Most likely, he was taken out before he could display his power. I'll swing my sword for your share as well.

"Geez, it's because he didn't train his body enough."

Beside me, Xenovia sighed as well. She was also calm—or so it seemed, but her eyes were still.

“But even so, they took out my cute kouhai. I’ll have to avenge him.”

Dreadful pressure was being given off from her. The pressure was even transmitted to me, her ally. She’s surprisingly soft towards her friends as well. Despite appearances, she also felt that Gasper-kun was cute. Being notified of his defeat was unforgivable to her.

Together, we prepared our special weapons and while shortening the distance between us and our opponents—we sprang forward!

Giiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiin!

Me and Shinra-senpai, and Xenovia and Meguri-san crossed swords. Sparks flashed from the force of the blades clashing, and intense clangs rang out.

At that instant, Meguri-san noticed what Xenovia held in her hand and took a step back.

“…A holy sword!?”

She let out a voice of surprise.

Yes, Xenovia was holding a holy sword. Moreover, it was a legendary one.

“Yeah, this is Ascalon. Ise-kun loaned it to me.”

[!?]

Azazel-sensei had noticed Ascalon, which was assimilated into the Boosted Gear.

“Ise, can’t you remove it?”

Due to these words, the fact that Ascalon could be detached from the Sacred Gear was uncovered. Sensei had then hurriedly handed Xenovia a training plan to get accustomed to Ascalon.

It seemed that she had practiced handling Ascalon while training outside. As both dragon-slaying powers and the Sekiryuutei's power were now imbued in Ascalon, it had changed into a specialised weapon that boasts enormous power.

It may not match Durandal's destructive power, but when taking into account its ease of use, it had a wider range of uses than Durandal.

However, that meant that Ise-kun didn't have Ascalon at present. That shouldn't backfire on us this time, but…

After that, me and Xenovia entered an intense slashing battle with our opponents.

We made sure to avoid each other, but it was the other person on the opponent's side, the [Rook] Yura-san, that I was concerned about.

Depending on her movements, we would know whether she regarded either of us as dangerous and was aiming at either me or Xenovia.

While remaining vigilant of Yura-san, I continued firing my holy demonic sword at the vice-president! My and Xenovia's swords emitted a holy wave. If we landed a blow on our opponents, big damage would be definite. If that happened, they would have to retire, as healing techniques were restricted.

A single stroke of the sword. If they suffered a single stroke of our swords, it would become our victory!

As she switched between offence and defence, Xenovia suddenly made a hole in space. Normally, anyone would think that she would materialise Durandal here—. But that wasn't it.

A holy aura drifted out from the tear in space and wrapped itself around the Ascalon that Xenovia held.

"—! While keeping Durandal locked up in the space!? You're taking out only its holy aura!"

Shinra-senpai was shocked as she understood. Xenovia smiled.

“Yeah, I was suggested an interesting way to use Durandal. I somehow managed to achieve it in my training. Now, I can use it more than sufficiently.”

Buchou and Azazel-sensei had also highly regarded Xenovia’s Durandal. At the same time, they felt that it was wasteful that she couldn’t control the sword.

Durandal was a holy sword that boasted a tremendous sharpness. Therefore, when its owner couldn’t control it, it became an assassin’s blade. In reality, Xenovia used Durandal, but it was also a fact that she was also considerably tossed about by its destructive power.

She may become able to control it eventually. However, until then it was also dangerous to simply swing such an assassin’s blade recklessly. Therefore, sensei had an idea.

“Can you not release only Durandal’s aura from the separate space? You could then clad it on Ascalon or a holy sword that Kiba creates.”

I was also wonderstruck by such an amazing idea of using Ascalon and my swords like this.

Durandal was simply kept in that space and it continuously emitted its mighty holy aura. Only the aura was taken out from the separate space and the power was poured onto other swords.

It wasn’t Durandal itself, but a power equal to its own was limitlessly poured onto a different sword. That—was the new power of the Ascalon that Xenovia held in her hands.

The Fallen Angel Governor Azazel. He had showed all these possibilities to us. Such a fallen angel had been our enemy. I was delighted that he was now on our side.

Xenovia attacked her opponent with Ascalon + Durandal’s aura!

Giin! Giiiiiiiin!

Silver light and sparks flashed in the darkness of the parking lot. The skill and sword possessed by the [Knight] Meguri-san were quite special, but she was gradually being cornered by Xenovia's speed and power!

"Take this!"

Not overlooking an instant of opening, Xenovia instantly cornered her opponent! She had got her!

But, there was someone who stepped into the space between them —the [Rook] Yura-san!

As she put out both of her hands in front of her—.

"Reverse!"

Xenovia let out her attack, but the holy aura had disappeared and changed into a demonic aura!

Xenovia's slash became an attack trapped by momentum, and in that moment her sword was caught by Yura-san and flicked away. Yura-san tried to pursue her in that state, but Xenovia regained her balance and avoided her kick.

Gasshaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaan!

The kick blew away several cars with its force. A direct hit would be dangerous.

I had become speechless from the phenomenon just now. A holy aura become a demonic aura!?

Yura-san had called out "reverse". In other words, she transformed a holy aura into a demonic aura? Was that Yura-san's ability? Or a Sacred Gear? I didn't understand the reason for it, but this was troublesome.

It was a kind of those so-called counters. It's a special case, but it would be bad if that counter was used while Yura-san and Meguri-san worked together.

Ascalon's holy power was reversed and turned into demonic power. Only ordinary damage would be given to a devil from demonic power. Since a devil's origin was from demonic magic. It became just an ordinary slash.

Xenovia also possesses incredible skills, but her battling would be disturbed because she had trained and fought based on holy swords. If she received a counter, even Xenovia would fall.

…Well done, Sitri group. If it's like this—.

"Xenovia! Switch with me!"

By my shout, me and Xenovia switched places and exchanged our respective opponents.

This was fine. With my holy demonic swords, the effect of their "reverse" would have no meaning. Because there was nothing to reverse when the power of holy and demonic were blended together.

Yura-san also didn't display her "reverse" stance, and she started to attack me along with Meguri-san.

Next to us, Xenovia and Shinra-senpai had started slashing at each other. Xenovia's furious attacks were intense and at last she managed to corner Shinra-senpai in front of a wall!

—She had her!

Xenovia, decide it instantly like that!

As if my thoughts were transmitted to her, Xenovia raised Ascalon and entered a posture for the finishing strike! She can do it! If we take out the [Queen], the whole situation will become considerably easier!

"With this—this match is decided!"

As Xenovia swung down the sword at Shinra-senpai and dealt a direct hit—at that instant.

“—Sacred Gear, [Mirror Alice][28].”

A huge ornamented mirror appeared in front of Shinra-senpai!

Xenovia’s slash continued without stopping and crushed the mirror.

Zuooooooooooooooooon!

“—!?”

A wave was released from the broken mirror and attacked Xenovia!

With a bewildered expression on her face, Xenovia spurted out blood all over the place.

“When this mirror is destroyed, the impact on it is doubled and returned to the opponent. —I am a counter-user. Kiba Yuuto-kun, it was a mistake to send the Power-type Xenovia-san against me.”

Shinra-senpai gave a sneer.

“Gahah!”

Lying on the road surface, Xenovia coughed out blood from her mouth in apparent pain.

—They got us! Her ability was different from what I had heard. Had she accomplished change and growth and attained a new ability!?

“The only one remaining is Kiba Yuuto. You’re the only one left.”

The three of them approached me. I picked up Xenovia and then swiftly hid myself within the shadows nearby.

I placed Xenovia in the shadow of a car and took out the medical supplies we had gotten at the drugstore a short while before.

We had completely lost just now. That she would station two counter-users here… It seemed that Sona-kaichou intended to completely crush us first. So she had naturally predicted that we would be the likely attackers.

Certainly, they were a threat to just us who were quick on our feet

and users of holy swords. Kaichou had supplemented for their respective weaknesses by having them team up against us and spurred us to use power.

—Had she predicted everything to this point?

Xenovia… was in serious condition. She had received double the power of Durandal and Ascalon.

If Shinra-senpai's Sacred Gear was a type that countered holy attacks perfectly, it would be an instant retire for us. If it was handled poorly, Xenovia could have died.

With these injuries, her withdrawal from the battlefield won't be long now. She'll completely retire with the next attack.

Buchou was the one who had the "Phoenix Tears". We couldn't use healing techniques here either.

Xenovia grasped my hand as I treated her and spoke.

"…Abandon me, Kiba. I'll disappear from this place anyway when I retire soon because of these injuries."

But I took my hand away from hers and continued treating her.

"Yeah, I know that. But, you know, I promised that I wouldn't abandon an ally so easily."

"…How soft. You're just like Ise."

I gave a smile at those words.

"That makes me happy. Because part of me also thinks that I'd like to become like him."

That's right, I wanted a spirit that would never give up like Ise-kun. He was amazing.

Even though he knows that he's weak, he still confronts the enemy. He belittles himself, but in fact, he understands himself more than anyone else and works hard.

Most likely, I wouldn't be a match for him anymore in terms of simply physical strength. His efforts and guts entered into the territory of deserving admiration. Advancing step by step with effort, his progress was nobler than anyone else.

"Become like Ise? You mean become a pervert?"

"That is Ise-kun's thing. —I want to obtain his guts and willpower."

At those words, Xenovia let out a strained laugh.

"…That doesn't suit you best, though."

I also thought that.

"True. But, as long as I can move even a single finger, I won't fall!"

"…I see. Are you telling someone like me to move since I can still move a single finger? What a cruel guy."

"If I fall down, I'll do what I have to do, even if I can move only a single millimetre or inch. Because otherwise—the regret of not doing anything would be so painful that I'd die!"

[Sona Sitri-sama's first "Pawn", retired.]

An announcement. It seemed that someone had taken out one of the opponents. We also had to hold on.

The sound on the enemies' footsteps approached.

—Xenovia.

You'll retire from here soon. But before that, I think that I'll show it to you. I appeared in front of the three opponents.

"Have you resolved yourself?"

Preparing to use her naginata, Shinra-senpai approached.

A small tear in space appeared behind me. Xenovia was making it form. It couldn't be seen like this, as it was in the enemies' blind spot. Then, Durandal's aura flowed into me.

Now then, Xenovia. I'll show it to you.

This technique created by you and me, Rias Gremory's two [Knights]!

Zazazazan!

Holy demonic swords sprang up everywhere within this parking lot. The holy demonic aura that covered them might have been little. But, if Durandal's aura is also added to them, it's another story entirely.

"—Durandal Birth!"

That attack pierced through Yura-san and Meguri-san. Just as they began to shine, they disappeared from this place.

Two down. Shinra-senpai—seemed to have escaped and left the parking lot.

In my arms, Xenovia's body began to shine.

"Kiba. That was a nice attack."

Her expression was covered with a smile as she was disappearing from here. So I also smiled and saw her off.

"Yeah, when you and I work together again, we can make more holy swords bloom."

Her weight had disappeared and then she herself disappeared as well.

Pariiiiiiin.

After making a short-lived noise, the holy swords that had bloomed all over the place crumbled and dissolved into nothingness.

Life 5: Buchou vs Kaichou: Second Half!

Part 1

Several minutes after I started to fight with Saji.

He and I were still exchanging punches with each other. No matter how you looked at it, I had the advantage. Saji was already ragged. He was defending himself by using a bundled-up line on his arm as a shield, but he couldn't offset every attack.

Sometimes he was knocked off his feet to the point that he crashed into the store behind him. Our hand-to-hand fighting was mostly equal. However, my offensive and defensive point was rising to the point where we couldn't even be compared. I still hadn't reached my true power, but…

I knocked him down many times. Even so, he still stood up. Even though his legs were trembling as he did so!

He was throwing punches at my armour. Saji's fists were already broken. I could hear his fists' wounds snapping, and they were covered with blood.

Though Saji had fired his line at me, the aura of the Sekiryuutei blew it off and didn't allow it to connect itself to me.

However, the line that had been connected to my right arm when he first arrived wouldn't come off even when I transformed into armour, and no matter how many times I tried to blow it off with my aura, it wouldn't go away! Just where the heck was it connected to?

Maybe the Ascalon I had lent to Xenovia could cut it off, but there was no point in saying that now. I'll have to cut it off when we join up later.

There was something else strange as well. Though my armour should be firm, every time Saji managed to hit me, my mind and body shook and resounded. It was gradually becoming distinct, and the pain I was receiving told me that I was surely swelling up

beneath my armour. —I was also certainly receiving damage!

“…I’ll win…Today, I’ll defeat you…I’ll take the first step towards my dream…”

What was this person before me? While spitting out bloody vomit, what was he?

At that time, I recalled in my mind the words that Tannin-ossan had said to me during training.

[Kid. Listen carefully. The most fearful attack is a “heavy blow”[29].]

[A heavy blow?]

[Yeah, the Rating Games that you’ll be fighting in from now on will have various people fighting with various feelings. For the sake of one’s desire, for the sake of a hobby, for the sake of one’s family, for the sake of a woman, for the sake of wealth, and for the sake of a dream. Various thoughts and feelings mix together. Among these, there are even people who have invested their lives into the games. Among the participants in this hellish iron pot, there is an attack that must be feared the most. That is the “heavy blow”.]

[Is that a special final move? Or a Sacred Gear? A magic technique?]

[—No. Kid, grasp your fist. What is being grasped inside your hand there?]

[……I don’t know.]

[It is “filled” with something. A dream, or a soul. One’s life is “put into” that fist. This is, above all, dangerous. If one has time to prepare other attacks, this blow can be dealt with to a certain extent one way or another. But, just that is not enough. The “heavy blow” reaches to the core of the body. This is effective. It is frighteningly effective. Even in the Underworld with its magic and science, the damage of that blow can’t be expressed clearly. But, the ones who had been hit with this blow understand. Yeah, this is bad, they think. An opponent that can release this blow is an

unmistakably, genuine strong enemy. You must never go easy against them. If an opponent can release that blow even if he is of a lower level than you, that is a different story. If you receive that blow, the battle situation will change completely. It pierces you. No matter what defence you use against it, it will reach the core of your body.]

I understand now, ossan. Saji's blows were piercing me. They were passing through my armour and reaching my body!

[This spirit. Is the "Prison Dragon" that sleeps in his Sacred Gear responding to Saji's feelings?]

Dragon-type Sacred Gears are scary, Ddraig. I couldn't understand what was happening!

"Hyoudooooooooooooooou!"

Even if his mind and body was tormented by the cruel reality, Saji didn't stopping punching.

I also responded in kind, and a battle of blows began.

"Let me ask you one thing! What is it like!? Are your master's breasts soft!? Is the rumour about them feeling like marshmallows true!? Is a woman's body seriously like pudding that doesn't collapse!?"

I was struck by the eyes of Saji that was burning with jealously and envy!

Seizing this opportunity, he fired the line, connected it to a bench behind me and swung it with all his strength, but I crossed my arms and protected myself. The bench broke into small pieces and scattered on the floor.

That was equal to the damage I didn't receive just now!

"What were you thinking when you were rubbing her breasts!? Damn iiiiiiiiiiiit!"

Wasn't this somehow more intense than the blows when he was

talking about his dream!?

Then, he extended several lines to the furniture store, and hauled out a ton of large furniture from there and drew an arc through the air with them as he brought them right above my head! So he intends to bring them all down on me like that!?

Gunn!

As all the large furniture fell down, I fired a Dragon Shot that I restrained to the minimum at the sky! The adjustment of power was too difficult! I couldn't fire ones like this many times!

Doooon!

The wave blast of red magic power instantly erased the large furniture, but—.

Dogoh!

My back was hit by an impact! When I looked back, Saji had changed the trajectory of a single line and knocked a dresser into me! It didn't give me any particularly great damage, but the impact was transmitted to my whole body.

Even if there wasn't any damage, this kind of impact was bad for my body! If I kept getting hit like this, it seems like adverse effects will start to pop up!

"I also want to rub them! I want to rub theeeeeeeeeeeeeeeem!"

Buwah! Saji was finally letting out tears of frustration!

"I haven't even seen breasts yet! You don't know how much I've prayed for nipples my entire life! And yet you get to see them as much as you liiiiiiiiiiiike!"

Gonn!

I knocked Saji down, but he stood up immediately! Damn it! What fighting spirit he has!

“But, Hyoudou! It isn’t breasts that I want the most! It’s to be a teacher! A teacher! I will become a teacher! Can’t I become a teacher!? Why do we have to be laughed at!?”

And then—Saji cried out at me. No, it was to the many people watching this—.

“We didn’t declare our dream for the sake of being laughed at…!”

“I’m not laughing! It’s impossible to be able to laugh at you when you’re risking your life like this!”

Facing him, I—hit Saji! It wasn’t enough, so I hit him again!

Saji’s face quickly started swelling up, and he spit out broken teeth and blood from his mouth.

Even so, Saji stood back up, and faced me again and again. He was that foolishly honest.

“Today! I will! Surpass you!!”

Saji’s shout heavily resounded all the way through my armour and to my heart with a bang.

After that, I pounded tens of blows into him.

“Hyuh…Hyuh…”

Before I realised, the sounds of breath coming from Saji’s mouth began to sound faint.

He should be at his limit already. Since he had multiple cuts in his mouth now, the blood wouldn’t stop flowing out from his lips. He was already at the point where he couldn’t even speak.

His face was swollen and his left eye was completely shut.

His body was shaking, and his stance was also unsteady. Some of his fingers were bent in the wrong direction as well. Even so—. Even so, Saji faced me with only a strong glint in his eyes.

“Come, Saji. Come! Sajiiiiiiiiiiii! You won’t let it end here, right!? You don’t intend to let it end like this, right!? Weren’t you going to do the things that aren’t possible for idiots like us and run swiftly forward!?”

He slowly moved forward, step by step.

Saji didn’t run away. Saji faced forward. Without shifting his gaze even an inch away from me, he advanced straight forward.

His appearance right now was similar to mine in the House of Phoenix battle. I had also seen myself then in the recorded video. Though I had been worn-out, I moved forward. In order to absolutely approach my opponent.

“You also trained desperately, right? I trained desperately as well.”

I could feel a dreadful pressure from Saji. Though I should clearly surpass him, I was seized with a terrible fear.

Even if I hit and hit, he wouldn’t fall—.

For there to be an opponent that I feel such great fear against…

Hey, Raiser Phoenix. You also felt like that when facing me, didn’t you? I understand it now. The reason why you kept knocking me down—.

“Saji, I’m going to beat you.”

Saji made a punch at me with his bent hand. It extended forward with seemingly slow speed, but I avoided it with the smallest movements. There, I exchanged a counter punch against him.

Dagan!

“__”

My punch perfectly hit Saji’s face. I also felt good feedback from it. It was a blow that completely cut off his consciousness.

Even so—. Even so, Saji grasped my right arm with both his hands.

So strongly that he wouldn't let go.

Saji had lost consciousness. But his hands wouldn't let go of my right arm.

Then, he kept holding onto my right arm, his body was wrapped in light.

I—couldn't take my eyes off from Saji until he disappeared.

Because I felt that, if I looked away, he may revive himself again.

[One of Sona Sitri-sama's "Pawns", retired.]

"Koneko-chan."

I stowed away my armour's mask on my helmet and showed my face.

"Could you hold my hand?"

"…Senpai?"

I spoke with a forced smile.

"This is the first time I knocked down a friend. I understand it. I understand it, but…"

Koneko-chan gently grasped my trembling fist while smiling. I could feel it even through my gauntlet.

"You were cool. A senpai to be proud of."

Those words were enough to reach me.

Part 2

With my match against Saji over, I broke open the door of a nearby vending machine and gulped down a water bottle from inside. Koneko-chan also quenched her thirst.

Damn it. I couldn't get rid of my body's shakiness. Was it an effect of wearing the armour? Certainly, I had received a lot of damage in the battle against Saji, but it wasn't to the extent that I couldn't fight.

According to an announcement a short while ago, it seemed that one of our [Knights] had been taken out. Was it Kiba? Or Xenovia? I didn't know which one it was. Whichever of them survived likely wasn't critically wounded.

The opponent's side had also lost one [Knight] and [Rook] apiece.

Our side had six people left. The other side had four. Those were numbers we still couldn't be careless against. I also had less than 20 minutes left for remaining in this state. We have to settle this quickly.

"…Ise-senpai."

Koneko-chan pointed at my right arm. That's right, even though Saji had disappeared, the line attached to my right arm hadn't. Even when I activated my armour, only this line hadn't disappeared. This line definitely connected over to the Sitri base.

What was this for? It didn't seem to be a very good thing, but since it hadn't disappeared along with Saji, he must have put a lot of thought and feelings into this…Saji, what on earth did you put into this?

At that time, we were contacted through our communication devices.

[Offence team, can you hear? We're now advancing towards the

enemy base as well.]

A communication from Buchou. I see, so Buchou had finally started to move as well. The opening and middle stages were over, and we were heading to the last spurt all at once! After taking a big breath, I spoke to Koneko-chan.

“Let’s go.”

Koneko-chan nodded, and we proceeded towards the final decisive battle.

There was a place that looked like a central plaza in the centre of the shopping mall.

Surrounded by a circular bench, there was a clock pillar in the centre of it. Shoppers that got tired with shopping frequently sat down there. Once we had advanced that far, I stopped walking.

Naturally. —Since Sona-kaichou was right there before me!

“How do you do, Hyoudou Issei-kun, Toujou Koneko-san. I see, so that’s the appearance of the Sekiryuutei. I do feel a terrible wave of power from you. It’s only natural for everyone to consider it dangerous.”

She spoke in a calm and composed tone.

Kaichou was surrounded by a barrier. The ones generating the barrier were the two [Bishop] members of the student council. And the line that was attached to my right arm was connected to one of the [Bishops]?

It couldn’t be, was their plan to channel my power through the [Bishop] and into the barrier? It was bad if the power of the Sekiryuutei was being poured into it!

If Kiba or Xenovia joined up with us, we could just cut through it with a holy sword.

Soon, the vice-president of the student council, Shinra-senpai appeared. This girl was also beautiful! Moreover, she had a surprisingly glamorous body!

Running after her, Kiba appeared from the opposite direction from which we had come from. —So the one that was taken out was Xenovia, huh.

"…Sona, you're quite bold. To have come right to the centre."

Buchou's voice! When I looked back, I saw that Buchou had also arrived here.

"Haven't you yourself, the [King], also moved personally as well, Rias?"

"Yeah, since we've already reached the final stage either way. Though it seems to have turned out quite differently from what I expected…"

Buchou wore a rigid expression. Certainly, the plan's goal was for Kiba and Xenovia to take down Kaichou. I was supposed to be the bait for the sake of that, but…She seemed to have completely read us!

Was Kaichou one step higher than us? No, I believed in Buchou!

—.

Suddenly, my consciousness became distant…A-re……A-rere?

I staggered in place…A-rere? The muddiness of my mind was becoming stronger little by little…?

Finally, I fell to my knees where I stood.

"…Ise?"

Buchou noticed the change in me and Asia activated her healing Sacred Gear over me. While giving off a pale green colour, it wrapped my body with a gentle light, —the pain disappeared, but the distantness of my consciousness didn't go away!

Buchou tried taking out the [Phoenix Tears], but stopped. She judged that, if something couldn't be completely cured by Asia's Sacred Gear, the tears would also have little effect.

All the other group members had noticed the change in me, and became bewildered. Among them, only Kaichou was giving a small smile.

"Neither Asia-san's Sacred Gear nor the [Phoenix Tears] will have any effect. Rias, I saw the video records of how the battle with Raiser was finished. What I understood from that was that Hyoudou-kun is a boy that won't give up in battle, to the point of being frightening. For the sake of his comrades, for himself, and above all for Rias—"

Kaichou continued further.

"We may not be able to defeat him with just damage. No matter how many times we knock him down, he'll just get back up. To us, your so-called "guts and spirit" is just as astounding as the power of the Sekiryuutei. Yes, if you don't give up and keep on standing up, you believe that you'll eventually defeat your enemy. That willpower connects directly to the power of the Sekiryuutei and increases your power by several times as well. That is the greatest weapon for Hyoudou-kun."

T-That's because guts and spirit are my only redeeming feature…

"That's why we had no choice but to beat you with a different method."

From a bag that was being held by one of the [Bishops]—a pack was taken out.

The interior of the pack was red. Like blood. The line was connected to the pack and—it couldn't be, inside the pack was… Kaichou confirmed the contents of the pack.

"—It's your blood. You are a reincarnated devil that is a human at your base. It's lethal if a human loses half of the blood coursing through their body. You know that, right? The rule of the Rating

Game. When a devil reaches the point of being unable to fight during the game, they are forcibly transported to the medical room.”

—Saji! You! This is what you were aiming for from the beginning!

Gakun! I suddenly lost all strength in my body!

Hyuh!

Kiba threw a holy demonic dagger and cut off the line that was connected to me, but—. Red blood rushed out from the cut line onto the floor. Ah, so my blood was drawn out through the line.

“It’s too late. You’ve already lost enough blood to be transported to the medical room.”

Those were Kaichou’s cold words!

“—Sona. You—!”

Buchou ran up to me. Her expression was wrapped in impatience.

Buchou and us had been completely outsmarted…

“That’s right, I used Saji’s Sacred Gear to suck out Hyoudou-kun’s blood little by little. —Until he entered a dangerous state. In order to continuously use a Sacred Gear, whose original ability is to suck out the energy of the target, to suck out their blood instead, considerable training and precise control was necessary. But, Saji managed to accomplish it.”

So he kept hitting me even while in that state not only because of his guts and spirit, but also to stall for time! Since he could only suck out my blood little by little, he sacrificed his own body back then in order to buy more time!

He could have stalled for time just by running away from me but, he confronted me face to face instead. —Saji! You!

—So everything was for the sake of beating me face to face!

“Hyoudou-kun. You are close to retiring. You should only be able to do one or two attacks now. The reason is blood loss. Your armour is solid. Your offensive power is great. However, when I searched for ways to defeat you, there were many. Even if we can’t physically defeat you, the game rules will consider you unable to fight.”

I—didn’t have the strength left to stand up anymore. I had completely lost…

So there was such a method…So Kaichou’s plans were superior to

ours!? Kaichou questioned Buchou.

“Rias, what are you willing to bet on this battle? I’m willing to risk my life. My dream is a very difficult one. If I don’t destroy the obstacles one by one, I can’t cut open a path of solution.”

Kaichou spoke to Buchou from right in front of her!

“Rias, I will destroy your pride and estimation.”

At Kaichou’s words, Buchou had a sour expression as if she had eaten a bitter bug. She must have been completely mortified! Certainly, Buchou had had the advantage in this battle. The advantage had seemed so great that it was only natural for us to win.

While in that situation, this had happened. If Buchou was simply defeated by an enemy who had taken measures against her, her estimation would lower accordingly! Kaichou had also aimed at that!

Sona Sitri! Just how far did you calculate things!

Kaichou’s gaze shifted to me.

“Saji—. He was always saying that he would surpass you. To Saji, you are a fellow [Pawn], a friend, and a rival he wants to surpass.”

—.

I was satisfied with Kaichou’s words. Saji’s fighting spirit and aspirations when facing me. Those had clearly been of high density.

He—was aiming for me from the start, huh.

“However, you have a legendary dragon inside you. With just that, he possessed an inferiority complex towards you. I wanted to convey to that child that he could fight while crying over such a thing. And that was conveyed to him. The line didn’t disappear even when Saji was worn out. He filled it with that much intense feelings. I’ll say this to you who is about to disappear from this battlefield soon. Just as you were aiming only for the top, Saji was

running towards the objective of defeating you. —You aren't the only [Pawn] that has a dream and lives earnestly! The one who beat you was Saji Genshirou!"

—Today! I will! Surpass you!!

I recalled Saji's words in my mind.

Saji—. So you…trained for the sake of defeating me!

…Damn it. Saji. Saji. You're amazing. Even when I kept hitting and hitting you, you only thought of beating me. Even if you couldn't beat me directly, you believed that your comrades could beat me if you left just a scratch—.

But, you didn't need to worry. It seems I was sunk by just your attack.

However, I don't want to disappear without showing my new special technique!

I mustered the last of my power and stood up! I stepped just a little distance away. I stood in a place where everyone present, both Gremory and Sitri, were caught!

If I'm going to fall, I want to fall down after doing some naughtiness! I placed both hands in front of me and set my sights on Buchou's breasts!

"Before I retire…I think I'll disappear after I've fulfilled my worldly desires…"

That's right, I was going to disappear either way. In that case, I might as well reveal everything I have in my last moments and then leave! I poured all the power left inside me into my brain. Flash, my delusions!!

The last of my aura wrapped around my entire body! It wasn't concentrated into power! It was concentrated into my head!

"Rise, my lust! Unleash, my worldly desires!"

Using the power of the Sekiryuutei, I aimed at a greater height once again! Hold on a little longer, my body! I will surpass the me of just before! This will be an unrivalled technique depending on how it's used!

"Spread out, the world of my dreams!"

Instantly, a mysterious space expanded and unfolded with me at the centre. Feeling it on their skin—the females of both the Gremory and Sitri groups protected and covered their bodies.

However, please be relieved. My new special technique doesn't deal direct damage. Its flashiness couldn't be compared to that of Dress Break.

Then, I cast a voice on Buchou—on Buchou's breasts.

"Please let me hear your voice!"

[Ise, are you okay…? If you do such a strange thing, it'll affect your health…]

I heard a cute-sounding voice from her breasts.

I see, I see. Fufufufu. I can hear it. I can hear it! Excellent!

"Buchou, you're worried about me right now, aren't you? That I'll hurt my body by doing something strange…"

At my words, Buchou had an astonished expression on her face.

"Ise! H-How do you know that…?"

I then questioned Kaichou's—Kaichou's breasts.

"What are you thinking about right now?"

[Could he have developed a technique to hear the voice of people's hearts☆? Sona, that's troubling☆]

I see, so Sona-kaichou's breasts arrived at that conclusion.

The character of the breasts weren't always the same as their

owners. Buchou's breasts sounded like a little girl. Kaichou's breasts sounded similar to her older sister, Serafall Leviathan.

"Sona-kaichou, you thought that my new special technique could let me hear the voices of people's hearts, right?"

Kaichou was seriously surprised by my confession.

"Fufufu, that's not it. It's close, but that's not it. I wanted to hear it. The voice of chests! No! The voice of breasts!"

Taking a pose, I magnificently called out the name of my new special technique!

"My new technique, [Pailingual][30]! My new technique lets me hear the voice of breasts from women only! …Haa, haa. When I question them, the breasts tell the answer to only me without lies! …Haa, haa. It's the strongest technique that lets me understand the heart of the opponent! Ugh, I don't have enough blood…"

I had decided! I had already decided! I may die while dizzy because I had nowhere near enough blood, but I was satisfied! The voices only I could hear! I wanted to hear them!

When I was secluded on the mountain, my sexual desire was also refused. As a result, I longed for breasts to the point of feeling overwhelmed.

—I want to see them.

But, there weren't even any porno books on the mountain. Of course, there weren't any women there either, just a huge dragon.

Every single day, while living a survival lifestyle, I was chased by the dragon. What happened to me, a modern-day child in a sensitive period of his life, by going to such an environment?

Starting from wanting to talk and meet with girls, the end result was—I groped for something close to an erotic state of mind.

I knew of famous priests who had secluded themselves on mountains for training and pursued the state of mind that opened

up enlightenment. They faced a state that abandoned worldly desires, but then, what happened when I did the reverse and entered training while only pursuing worldly desires?

—My heart arrived at searching for erotic things and their source.

Nights on the mountain. While wrapping myself in big leaves, I looked at the sky and endlessly thought of breasts.

I also sometimes sat in Zen mediation stance. I even sat under a waterfall in a natural state, my head filled with only worldly desires.

I want to rub them. Touch them. Inhale them. Poke them. Go between them.

After thinking of various things for many days, I suddenly came to a realisation.

—I want to talk with breasts.

When I realised my deep gratitude and blessings toward breasts, I wanted to talk with breasts. What did breasts think and say? I wanted to know.

At that time, I couldn't reach those thoughts and feelings with my lack of power, but with the power of the Sekiryuutei, the possibilities multiplied! And at last, I have completed it!

"Hey! Breasts of the [Bishop] onee-san over there, what are you thinking!?"

"No, don't listen!"

The Bishop onee-san felt danger to her body and covered her breasts, but—too slow!

[Kiba-kyun! I'm so happy to be standing on the same battlefield as Kiba-kyun!"

"What's with that!? It's only Kiba that's popular! The breasts of the other [Bishop] onee-san, what are you thinking!?"

With just the turn of my gaze towards her, the opponent crouched down with her head between her knees!

“Please stop it! It’s disgusting!”

[Hyoudou is scary…Even though he has such a strong-looking armour, why can I only see him as an ordinary pervert…?]

……As a result of those two in a row, I collapsed where I stood. Uu, so my body was also at its limits…

Damn it! So there were also things that shouldn’t be heard! So it was like that!

When I suddenly looked around—everyone’s eyes were twitching.

…A-re? Hey, why weren’t you all surprised at this strongest technique of mine!

Kaichou’s eyes twitched, and Buchou put a hand to her forehead and sighed.

“Rias…This is a little…”

“I’m sorry…”

“I think it’s a scary technique, but with this violation of privacy, won’t female devils no longer fight him from now on?”

“Yeah, we’ll have to be severely careful now…”

A-rerere!? What was with these reactions!? I think it’s definitely a useful ability! Rather, like this, it’s as if I’m—.

“…a true pervert!”

[You ARE a pervert!]

I received a full-blown tsukkomi from both the Gremory and Sitri sides!

“__”

I…was speechless! Impossible…I just heard the voice of everyone's breasts in my ear.

Look! This technique was perfect, see!

"Asia's breasts, what are you thinking right now!?"

[Stupid Ise, how can you do such a thing while injured! B-But, I'll definitely cure you!]

Ah, what a thing. So Asia's breasts were tsundere[31]!

So the breasts expressed what the target was thinking like this!?

"…Even though you were cool before…Lewd Sekiryuutei. The worst."

Au! Koneko-chan's scathing words!

Ugh! …It's no good. My dizzy consciousness was at its limit. I didn't have enough blood…

…Alright, then I'll at least read Kaichou's strategy at the end.

"Kaichou's breasts-san! Please tell me what kind of strategy you intend to use now!"

[This special barrier made by the two [Bishops] is a decoy☆. Only my spirit has been placed in the barrier, and my body is just a holographic image☆. Since my spirit has come here, it's possible to make the presence of my body disappear and to make it look like my aura is inside the barrier☆. My true body is on the roof☆. It's a strategy to make you attack the me inside the barrier and weaken you guys even a little☆.]

I see, I see. So that is just an image. But, only her spirit had come here.

In any case, I told everyone about what Kaichou's breasts had said,

"Everyone, the Kaichou in that barrier…is a decoy. She's just a holographic image created by the two [Bishops] inside the barrier…

Their strategy is to make us wastefully attack the barrier here and weaken us even a little…The real Kaichou is on the roof! It seems that only her spirit has been moved into the hologram…That's also why Koneko-chan's enemy detection couldn't find the Kaichou on the roof. But, because her spirit came here, Pailingual also worked and let me hear the holographic breasts, is that it…?"

After communicating just that, I collapsed.

"Ise-san!"

Asia tried running over to me, but Kaichou's [Queen] didn't let her go to me.

Asia then struck a pose of prayer where she was, and her body began to shine faintly, trying to spread out to her surroundings. Was this the area expansion of Asia's healing ability? This was the fruits of her training!

She should have understood that healing would not have any effect on me at this point. Even so, her natural gentleness made her worry for me. Asia, you really are a good kid. With tsundere breasts as well, you're unmatched!

"I was waiting for that!"

One of the [Bishops] undid Kaichou's holographic image. Both the barrier and Kaichou's hologram disappeared, but without paying any heed to that, the opposing [Bishop] set foot into Asia's healing area.

"Reverse!"

Don! The pale green light changed instantly and emitted something red and dangerous instead.

"—Ah."

In that instant, Asia's body shined and was disappearing…!?

"…The reverse of healing is damage…Argento-san's healing ability is immense…If that is reversed…"

The opposing [Bishop] that had entered Asia's healing area had a satisfied-looking expression on her face, even as she vomited blood. What! What had happened!?

"…I beat the Gremory's healer…Kaichou…"

Kaichou's [Bishop] then disappeared at the same time as Asia.

…Damn it. They took out Asia…I-I too…

My body was wrapped in light. I was already done for…I wanted to promote to [Queen] by entering the enemy's base…To lose without even doing that…was pitiful!

But, I was satisfied with being able to use [Pailingual]…

…Saji. I—.

[One of Rias Gremory-sama's "Bishop", retired.]

[One of Sona Sitri-sama's "Bishop", retired.]

[Rias Gremory-sama's "Pawn", retired.]

VIP

I—Azazel, laughed inside the VIP room.

“…So this is the current Sekiryuutei.”

One of the spectating leaders murmured that. The VIP room had become opened-mouthed.

Naturally. Since a new stupid technique had been displayed on the monitor as they all watched as if devouring it.

—Pailingual.

It was just way too dumb. Even I, being open-minded to perverted things, couldn’t understand at all what had happened in that moment. Since even I was like this, the minds of the others must be in quite a terrible state indeed.

On the monitor, Rias—was blushing deeply. I sympathised with her, but dear me, this was interesting.

However, this Pailingual. It had no flashiness, but in reality, it was a fearful technique.

If the opponent was female, the state of the battle would likely be overturned. Because it exposed the inside of their hearts. There was no other technique as terrifying as this to an opponent.

Moreover, it could read the inside of their hearts even in the type of situation where the spirit was being projected as a holographic image.

In matches limited to female opponents, he would be unparalleled with that technique. He keeps rapidly developing techniques that make him hated by women. Does he really intend to become popular?

It’s regrettable that the person himself doesn’t seem to completely understand how amazing this technique is since it occurred to him

at the top of his sexual desire, but…

Rather, he'll be told by Rias that he's banned from using it in the games. As it is now, he won't be able to participate in games with other devils, since many devils own female devil servants.

Vali. I also understand why you, who are of an exceptionally higher rank than Ise, took such an interest in the Sekiryuutei who is widely called the weakest of all the successive generations.

—Interesting.

He was described with that one word. A guy who watches and fights without getting tired is the best opponent for a battle enthusiast.

Hey, Vali. Ise is evolving and becoming strong in a different way than you. At that time, what will you do? How will you fight him? He's a guy who goes far and in a slanted way above our expectations.

So much fun. I really was enjoying myself.

Most likely, it will be the greatest showdown between red and white out of all the previous generations.

Besides that, though, there was the [Reverse] used by the Sitri group. That was something researched by us. We had started giving technical assistance to the devils, but that [Reverse] was still in the research stage. So someone like Armaros or Sahariel offered it to them on the condition of getting data on it during the game, huh? Geez…

It was still at the research stage, so it wouldn't be strange if anything happened. And Sona Sitri and her servants used it while acknowledging that. So their resolution—their fighting spirit of wanting to win at any cost must have been stirred up, huh.

There were also Fallen Angels who picked out Sacred Gears and embedded them into themselves, but this [Reverse] was similar in that it forcibly granted someone an ability they didn't originally have. As an act that shortens one's life and destroys one's own

abilities, it's dangerous.

Ise also obtained the power of the Hakuryuukou and shaved off his life. Even if this ability increases as an appendix to his own ability like Kiba, there are also safe examples of this, but as expected it couldn't really be recommended.

Incidentally, since my artificial Sacred Gear was made specifically for my use right from scratch, it has no problems.

Sorry, but I'm going to have to advise them that [Reverse] should be banned from future games. I also feel like I do not want to nip young buds in such a place.

However, to think that they would use [Reverse] like this. Originally, it was created for the sake of reversing contrary things that turned the holy into demonic and darkness into light. To think that they would skilfully use [Reverse] in accordance to their opponents' abilities.

I ascertained with my own eyes the resolution of the Sitri group this time. Show me how far you guys can go.

In any case, how will the others act now that Ise has been lost? I knew that previously, you would get discouraged by such a thing, Rias, Akeno.

"Hohohoh, what an interesting battle."

The damn old geezer Odin watched the monitor in seeming satisfaction. For that selfish geezer to give praise. Odin spoke to Sirzechs.

"Sirzechs."

"Yes."

"About that kid who has the dragon Sacred Gear."

"You mean Hyoudou Issei-kun? He has the Sekiryuutei."

However, Odin's next words were unexpected.

“No, I mean the [Pawn] of the Sitri family.”

…I see, so he paid attention to that one. Odin continued speaking.

“What a good devil. You should take good care of that one. He’ll become strong. The achievement of beating the Sekiryuutei kid is huge. Watching the Rating Games of devils is fun because of this. The weak change in the middle of a match. This is what a true match is.”

Odin was paying the greatest of compliments to someone whose existence he didn’t even know about several hours ago.

“That’s right, that’s right! Odin-ojii-chan really understands things, after all☆”

Serafall also praised her little sister’s group and seemed cheery. Even though she had watched with tearfully crying face until just now.

That pawn of Sona Sitri. She said his name was Saji Genshirou. You could say that his estimation rose more than Ise in this match.

This game had been broadcasted across the entire Underworld. Unexpectedly, the name of this previously unknown dragon Sacred Gear user may have become more famous than the Sekiryuutei.

Ise, Rias. This world that you’re trying to plunge into has many difficulties in store for you all.

End Game

After Ise-kun and Asia-san disappeared from the battlefield, there were only four of us left, including me—Kiba Yuuto, my master Rias-buchou, Akeno-san and Koneko-chan.

The enemy had three people left. Kaichou, Shinra-senpai, and the remaining [Bishop] student council member.

—We had lost half of our members.

A game where one side was supposed to dominate was full of major upsets right from the beginning. The side that was said to be superior had also lost half of their members. I could already hear the comments of those high-class devils watching us from above.

Buchou's estimation will surely fall. But, we couldn't let it fall any lower than this.

Ise, the mood-maker of our team, had disappeared. This was…huge. I somehow endured it, but what was going on in Buchou's mind? If Asia were still here, she would be in shock.

Our current members—wouldn't change for the moment. Even if there had been a shocking impact just now, as long as it didn't affect the battle, there was no problem, but…

Asia had also been unexpectedly taken out. The so-called [Reverse], which had been chosen to be used when she activated her healing ability, and moreover her area-expansion version. So the opposite of healing was damage …Asia-san's healing ability was enormous. The damage caused by [Reverse] must have also been unimaginable.

More importantly, Asia had exited in an instant. The opposing Bishop—Hanakai-san had also disappeared from the attack she gave. Most likely, they had predicted beforehand that the healing ability could be expanded and that it would be used, and made tactics against it. They must have also taken into consideration that Asia-san's area-expanded healing would heal without distinguishing

between enemies and allies. If reverse had been activated when more than one ally was being healed…We could have also been completely wiped out. What terrifying tactics.

So you thought that far ahead, Sona-kaichou. However, even so, to have the intention of sacrificing her servants…I could feel that their power of unity was greater than ours. Because she believed in her members, they could display such feats of strength.

On the other hand, Ise's technique was…I couldn't say anything anymore. But, if the opponents are limited to women, it may become quite threatening…Wait, this wasn't what I should be thinking about, though.

Sona-kaichou hadn't aimed at winning with immense power, but instead at using counters that made use of us, who did possess immense power. This was the original Rating Game. You couldn't easily win with just power!

Buchou stood up and looked above. She must have been focusing on Kaichou, who was on the roof.

Even though Ise-kun had been lost, Buchou was calm. As expected of a [King]. Since if the [King] didn't function and act, the game would be affected.

"Koneko, can you feel her spirit?"

Buchou asked Koneko-chan this.

"Yes. I couldn't detect it before, but now I can sense Kaichou's spirit on the roof. I think that the barrier from before was false illusion that made it look like Kaichou was inside it, and also a special decoy that made anyone unable to perceive the actual person's spirit and location."

Her cat ears were moving timidly, seemingly searching for Kaichou's spirit.

Your cat ears are very cute, Koneko-chan. Koneko-chan was also a battle-ready state, even if Ise-kun had disappeared. I was thankful for this. With this, we can fight sufficiently.

I pointed my sword at Shinra-senpai and the other servant from the Sitri group.

“Now then, how shall we do this? As two blade-users, shall we decide it by the blade?”

Shinra-senpai responded to my question.

“That is also fine. In chess, when a pawn is promoted, in most cases they become [Queen]. However, the battle situation changes if they promote to [Knight] instead depending on the setting. There are also a lot of differences between actual chess and the Rating Games, but—this will be a good match.”

The battle between me and Shinra-senpai was decided. Besides her, there was only the opposing [Bishop]—Kusaka-san, but—.

At that moment, Akeno entered my sight as she gave off a crackling golden aura from her entire body.

Akeno-san—had a cold look in her tear-soaked eyes and was giving off a strange aura.

“…Even though I tried to show Ise-kun my determination…”

She went forward a step on with wobbly and shaky legs. I could feel a strong pressure in that step that couldn’t be expressed in words.

“…Even though I tried to overcome it…by using this hateful power in front of him…”

Akeno-san slowly raised her hands in front of her and—.

“I won’t forgive you.”

She showed the natural face of her S-side! The number one state that Akeno-san shouldn’t be touched in! Impossible, to think that the usually calm Akeno-san would react to losing Ise-kun like this!

“—Disappear.”

After that brief anger-filled declaration, a great mass of thunder

sprung forth from Akeno-san's hands and swooped down on the Sitri [Bishop] Kusaka-san!

Dooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooon!

"Reverse!"

At the instant of impact, Kusaka-san spread out her hands and tried to reverse the thunder, but—.

Bigagagagagagagagagagagagagagagagagagagaga!! The violent thunder wrapped around Kusaka-san!

Kusaka-san couldn't reverse the thunder and directly received Akeno-san's attack!

And at the same time, she was wrapped in light and disappeared!

"It seems it was useless. She tried to reverse the thunder, but what I shot just now was lightning. Thunder and light. The reverse of the light portion wasn't enough to reverse it all."

[One of Sona Sitri-sama's "Bishops", retired.]

"—The power couldn't be overturned when the power being reversed was changed."

Just as Akeno-san said, it seemed that their training wasn't enough for them to master the power of [Reverse]. Akeno-san then pointed her hands at the [Queen] Shinra-senpai!

Akeno-san had already disregarded the battle between me and senpai! She had forgotten me in her shock over losing Ise-kun and her anger at not being able to display her lightning power to him!

It may be that, as a result of that, Akeno-san was able to conquer that power, but what an unexpected development. To think that Ise-kun meant that much to Akeno-san!

"Kuh!"

Shinra-senpai felt the danger to her body and started running away from here!

Kah! Doooooooooooooooooooooooooooon!

The lightning extended straight towards senpai! If a devil was hit directly by that, they would be helpless! Since it was mixed with the power of thunder and the power of light, the weakness of devils, just imagining getting hit by that power was terrifying.

However, Shinra-senpai avoided the lightning and tried to escape

into the interior of the department store.

I swiftly ran after her! I won't lose when it comes to speed!

While dashing, I created a holy demonic sword, and when I caught up I stabbed at her! My blade was blocked by her naginata, but I didn't know when she would bring out that counter Sacred Gear!

Shinra-senpai took out a small bottle from her pocket. —[Phoenix Tears]! So the Sitri [Queen] had theirs!

She threw the small bottle at me and cut it apart with her naginata. The liquid inside was poured onto me!

"Reverse!"

Shinra-senpai shouted that! She intended to change the immense healing power of the tears into damage the instant it hit me! I quickly changed my holy demonic sword into a sword of water!

Bishah!

The wave of water mixed together with the tears. When mixed with something else, the tears lost their effect. And as a result, the [Reverse] also lost its meaning!

"If an opening is made even just a little!"

Senpai sharply turned her naginata towards me!

I see, the attack just now was to make me block and step out. However—.

Zan!

Holy demonic swords bloomed in profusion around Shinra-senpai! The multiple holy demonic blades that sprouted out from the floor destroyed senpai's naginata.

"The current me has no openings."

When I tried firing a second bout of swords at her, she made the

mirror from before appear in front of her. I weakened the swords as much as possible and they stabbed with just enough power to destroy the mirror.

Barin! Doooooooooo!

The short-lived mirror broke and the impact was returned to me with double the damage, but—I could endure this much! I clenched my teeth in pain and raised my left arm towards the sky.

“Petro, Basileus, Dionysius, Holy Mary. Please listen to my voice!”

Space warped and a tear was created! I stuffed my hand into there!

“No way!? That’s!”

Understanding the meaning of this, Shinra-senpai was shocked.

“In the name of the saints lodged in the holy blade, I release thee. —Durandal!”

The item I took out from the space was the legendary holy sword, Durandal!

Xenovia! I’ll clear away your regrets here and now!

Following the momentum as I took Durandal out, I slashed at Shinra-senpai! The holy sword hit, and serious damage was given to Shinra-senpai.

Even in that situation, she didn’t activate her counter Sacred Gear. So she was unable to use it continuously.

“It was Xenovia’s suggestion. That, in the case that she became unable to function and fight, she would transfer the sword’s right of use to me, since this sword is too good for her.”

That’s right, Xenovia had taught me how to use Durandal.

And how could I, who possesses holy demonic swords, use Durandal, you ask?

“However, your holy demonic aptitude is—”

Shinra-senpai said that as she was wrapped in the light of retirement teleportation.

“I had no past. Because of that, I saw hell, but…I’m different now. Thanks to attaining Balance Breaker, it seems I can also handle Durandal like this.”

Buuuuuuuuuuuun…

Durandal was emitting a quiet and peaceful surge. It wasn’t letting out a violent and rampaging surge like it did with Xenovia.

“Kuh! This is…! You can handle it better than Xenovia-san!?”

Shinra-senpai said that, but I didn’t think so.

“…Since Xenovia has aura temperament that desires power, Durandal may have also reacted to that. But I choose certainty over power. Ability over strength.”

I had intended to suppress its power, but even so the floor had been cut into two equal halves up to quite a distance away from the shockwave of slashing Shinra-senpai. It seemed I would receive a minus evaluation because of this.

“I thought that it was a stubborn steed that didn’t listen to the words of its wielder, but it really seems to be true. It cut more than I thought…So controlling it is still difficult.”

“…! This is outside of our calculations, Sona! Even more than Hyoudou-kun…! Their true ace is…! The servant to pay attention to is…Kiba Yuuto!”

Shinra-senpai left just those parting words and disappeared from this place.

[Sona Sitri-sama’s “Queen”, retired.]

“It’s because I—aim to surpass Ise-kun, no, the Sekiryuutei.”

Mortifying. It had been mortifying for me. The loss against the Phoenix family. Ise-kun, you weren't the only one who was filled with feelings of frustration and mortification back then.

—Since Rias Gremory's true [Knight] was taken out without being able to protect my master.

Even though I had finally attained Balance Breaker, the power of me and my comrades couldn't connect with Kokabiel, and I couldn't enter the battle against the Hakuryuukou either. I hadn't been helpful at either of those times.

Mortifying.

It was mortifying for me, Ise-kun!!

That's why I trained from scratch under my teacher. Truly from scratch. I learned from the sword basics again.

Perhaps telling myself that I wasn't like you, I also kept doing straightforward training to the point of foolishness. If I simply prided myself on attaining Balance Breaker, that will be where I degenerate into weakness!

"—More than anything else, I hate it seeming like the only servant is the Sekiryuutei."

You may be aiming at Vali. But my only goal was to be my master's sword, and stand as a partner next to you, my comrade.

Rias Gremory had not only the Sekiryuutei, but also the "Kiba Yuuto of the Holy Demonic Swords". Because I wanted to say that, I —.

"—I'll also promise the same as you promised. I will never make my master Rias Gremory cry again."

The only remaining opponent was—the [King], Sona Sitri-kaichou.

The roof of the department store. The sky outside was white, empty

of anything. Because it was within the space of the game.

Our remaining four members had gone there. In front of us was Sona-kaichou.

Kaichou turned her gaze towards us and smiled bitterly. Buchou asked.

“Sona, why on the roof?”

“The [King] must survive until the end. That is the duty of the [King]. If the [King] is taken out, the game would be over, right?”

“…Yes, I didn’t question the profoundness of that.”

“Rias, Saji won against the Sekiryuutei. Neither Ise-kun nor you made any mistakes. —Please don't make light of that child. You aren’t the only ones that are desperate.”

“Yes, I could sense it with my body. —Now then, let’s settle this, Sona.”

Buchou took a step forward. Does she intend to do this one-against-one?

She was a person that wouldn’t listen even if stopped. In that case —.

“If I sense danger, I’ll enter to help immediately. I won’t listen to your selfishness.”

“……”

Buchou didn’t react to my words, but she should have understood. If Buchou was close to losing, I wouldn’t pay attention to her protests and enter to help as well.

If the [King] was taken down, it was over. I can’t let you get taken out, Rias-buchou.

Then, the battle between best friends started—.

An aura of water gathered around Kaichou, and gradually formed something. This was no ordinary amount of water. Looking at it, the water seemed be collected from everywhere within the department store.

As expected of the Sitri family whose specialty is water magic. I had heard that the older sister's specialty was ice, while the younger sister's was water.

In her magic, Buchou carried the power of destruction. An attack that destroys the opponent. Without hesitation, Buchou fired magic bullets at her friend Sona-kaichou! The number of bullets was endless like that of a machine gun!

The bullets were only about the size of a softball, but I could feel magic of high purity in each shot. It seemed that the results of Buchou's training were also coming out. That she wasn't attacking showily was because of the rules.

Zabun. Zabaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaan.

Sona-kaichou manipulated the water and made it into a wall, stopping Buchou's attacks. The instant that Buchou's magic hit, the water was also annihilated at the same time, but because she was gathering it from the entire building, it was unlimited.

"Now then, Rias. I shall thoroughly display my water techniques to you."

Kaichou transformed a large amount of the water with magic, turning it into many hawks that flew in the air, serpents that slithered on the ground, valiant lions, wolves that herded together, and several huge dragons as well.

So she can make this many different things at once! Her magic skill surpasses that of Buchou!

"Just as I wished for, Sona!"

Smiling fearlessly, Buchou piled compression upon compression of her power of destruction and made a countless number of magic bullets in the air. Those without enough power would vanish from

just one of those shots. To have condensed that many of them, it seemed that Buchou had built up her magic power fairly well in her training.

Both excelled in the quality of their magic, but looking at it like this, Buchou stood out in power while Kaichou stood out in technique.

Both of them stood ready. Then, the two of them—unleashed their attacks at each other at the same time.

[Resign confirmed. It is the victory of Rias Gremory-sama.]

WINNER

Part 1

After the game had ended, I woke up within the medical facility. I was on a bed.

That's right, this is the first time I've ended up here.

My case this time had been more a matter of blood loss than injuries. It seemed I had been given a blood transfusion immediately after that and could now move like this. I had gone outside and was drinking juice by the vending machine.

We had won.

However, half of us, consisting of me, Xenovia, Asia and Gasper, had been taken out, and the Gremory group which had been said to be overwhelmingly superior before the game had our estimation lowered.

Our estimation seemed to have particularly lowered because of how Gasper had been lost so quickly right at the start and how I, the Sekiryuutei, had been taken out. As the natural result hadn't come about, the evaluation of those at the top was harsh.

Buchou—appeared completely mortified. There were also the achievements of Kiba, who displayed ace-class strenuous effort and the fact we had achieved victory in the end, but—. It seemed that the end had been won by a direct confrontation between the [Kings].

This had been our first victory…Somehow, we hadn't been blessed with a complete victory. We had certainly gone through a tough battle. Even though our group had enormous power, we were far away from a perfect victory.

Yeah! This situation was bad!

Shaking my head, I decided to change the mood and to go to Saji's hospital room. His injuries had also been completely cured already.

In the game we were enemies, but once it had ended, we were friends as usual.

Well now, I'll go boast about Buchou's breasts again.

"Please take this."

I heard Sirzechs-sama's voice from Saji's room. I could see inside the room from the slightly open door. Inside were Sirzechs-sama, Kaichou, and Saji on his bed.

Saji was receiving something from Sirzechs-sama. He was holding an expensive-looking small box in his hands.

"U-Umm…This is…?"

Saji was nervously trembling.

"This is something awarded to the person who excelled and fought the most impressively in the Rating Game."

Sirzechs-sama said that while smiling. However—.

"I-I…lost to Hyoudou…T-This isn't a situation where I should be receiving this."

Saji grasped the sheets of his bed in apparent frustration and regret.

"That's true. But, consequently, that Ise-kun—the Sekiryuutei was defeated. We watched your battle in excitement from the spectators' room. To the extent that even Odin of the Norse praised you."

Sirzechs-sama took out a medal from the small box and put it on Saji's chest.

"You shouldn't humble yourself. Even a devil like you can aim for the top. I'm happy that I can see promising young devils of the future. Devote yourself more. I have high expectations of you."

Then, Sirzechs-sama patted Saji's head.

"It's fine no matter how many years or decades it takes. —Continue

aiming to be a Rating Games teacher.”

At Sirzechs-sama’s words, Saji—cried silently. His tears flowed down endlessly, and his face became disheveled.

“…Saji, you displayed a gallant figure to a lot of people. Because you fought a splendid battle.”

Sona-kaichou was brimming with calm and self-control from her eyes.

Kaichou is also surely happy that her prided servant had gained such a huge estimation.

Saji fingered the medal on his chest, then wiped away his tears with his hand and nodded strongly.

“…Yes…Thank you very much!”

……

Feeling that it would be impolite to listen any further, I left that place.

…Saji, congratulations.

I had only thought of Vali as my rival. I had believed without doubt that Vali was the only rival I had to defeat. —I was wrong.

That’s why, I’ll say it to him face-to-face once more next time.

That, I’m sorry.

Hey, Saji. Which one of us will advance to being a high-class devil first and have our dreams granted?

I—won’t lose! Absolutely. And I’ll win for sure the next time we fight!

So, until next time.

My rival, Saji Genshirou.

Part 2

I came across Buchou just before she entered my hospital room.

“Buchou.”

Buchou also noticed me, and smiled. Like that, we went into my hospital room and started to chat pleasantly.

“Ise, thank you for your hard work in the game. You did well. But, please don’t embarrass me so much, okay? Since your sexual desire really is too excessive.”

Buchou smiled bitterly. Aaaah, I embarrassed her.

“S-Sorry…My new techniques and power-ups tend to be related to my worldly desires…”

“That technique is sealed when in games.”

“Eeee

lose.”

It was just as Buchou said.

If we had made just a single mistake, we might have lost. Even though their chances of winning were less than ours, our opponents desperately came at us. Because they also moved forward, believing they would win.

If one gives in and is careless, one can also lose the matches they could win.

Me and Buchou had realised this obvious fact once again.

…They’re difficult, these games. The same with actual battles.

And just as I had seen the path to being a high-class devil, it felt far away.

But, it wasn’t an unreachable distance. Eventually, I too, like Buchou—.

“But Ise. Both Akeno and Koneko overcame their walls in this game. This is something to be happy about.”

Buchou said that while smiling. That smile was wrapped in gentleness.

“Yes, I think so too! I feel like we won the match, but lost the game, but even so I’m happy that Akeno-san and Koneko-chan have advanced forward!”

“It’s thanks to you, Ise. Thanks to you, everyone in my group are breaking through the things they carry. You’ve broken through all the things I’ve worried about, Ise. I’m very grateful.”

“N-No, I didn’t do anything in particular. I just thought about keeping everyone happy.”

That’s right, I wanted to advance forward together with everyone. Even if tough things occur like this time, I want to break through them together. Because we’re comrades and friends.

“Ise, I’m glad that you’re my servant…Please stay with me forever.”

“Yes, Buchou! I’ll always stay by your side!”

I was also happy, being able to see Buchou’s greatest-rank smile.

Kon-kon.

Suddenly, someone knocked on the door to my hospital room. After I answered “Yes, come in”—an old man that I hadn’t seen before came in. He was wearing a hat and had only a single eye. Moreover, he had a long white beard.

“Old man, who are you?”

When I asked in puzzlement, the old man laughed.

“I’m the Old Man of the Northern Countryside. Sekiryuutei, it seemed you need to study a little more. Well, you are devoted.”

What was this overly-familiar old-man saying so suddenly? But, how did he know I was the Sekiryuutei?

“You’re Odin-sama, right? This is the first time we’ve met. I’m Rias Gremory.”

Buchou seemed to know him. Odin? Hmm, I feel like I’ve heard that name somewhere before…

“I see, I see. Sirzechs’ little sister, huh. I saw you in the game. Well, there was also something like that. But, I see, hmm. So big. When I was watching, I was fascinated by just these.”

The old man was looking at Buchou’s breasts with lewd eyes! Heeeeeeeey! You damn old man! Those breasts are mine! No one besides me can look at them with lewd eyes! As I tried to ferociously protest, a beautiful armoured woman who had entered the room at some point hit the old man’s head with a paper-fan.

“Geez! Did I not already tell you that indecent eyes were prohibited?! Since there’s going to be an important meeting now, please pull yourself together as the King of the Norse Gods!”

“…Truly a Valkyrie with no openings. I know already. It’s a conference on terrorist-countermeasures with the angels, devils, fallen angels, Zeus of Greece and Indra[32] of Mt. Sumeru[33].”

The old man muttered with his eye half-closed as he rubbed his head.

“Well, it’s fine. Sirzechs’ sister and Sekiryuutei. The world isn’t full of only trials, there are many fun things as well. Advance forward while both fully enjoying and suffering through it all. Being reckless is the only way for youngsters to grow up. Hohoho.”

Leaving just those words, the old man and the armoured woman left my hospital room.

Who was that? That old man…He stared at my Buchou’s breasts! Anyone who makes a move on Buchou’s breasts is my enemy, no question about it! I’ll never permit such a thing!

I asked Buchou about it afterwards, but apparently that old man was a northern god! He just looked like a dirty old man!

…Really, there are things I just don’t understand in this world.

Reunion

Part 1

The second half of August—.

We of the Gremory group were receiving a farewell from the underworld at the station in front of the main residence.

“Well then, Issei-kun. I look forward to the day we can meet again. You may return here any time without hesitation. Think of the Gremory family as your own family.”

Buchou’s father said that as many servants stood behind him.

“Thank you very much! B-But, that is a bit too grand for me…”

I was smiling bitterly, but Buchou’s mother also affirmed it.

“Not at all. Issei-san. Please take care of Rias in the human world. Since my daughter can be so selfish, I worry.”

“M-Mother! W-What are you saying!?”

Buchou’s face turned deep red. What a cute Buchou!

“Yes! Of course!”

I hit my chest and nodded. I’ll take care of Buchou! It may be rude of me to say this, but I’ll protect the woman I fell in love with all my life!

“…Uu, I’m also being moved to tears. The future of my family is bright…”

Buchou’s father was crying. Eeeeeeeeeh? Why, why?

Buchou’s mother sighed beside him.

“Wait a minute, dear. Isn’t this where the father is supposed to retaliate by saying something like [I won’t give up my daughter yet!]?”

“Even if you say that, Issei-kun seems to have surpassed my power already, so isn’t it enough already? I think it will be fine even if I settle down soon.”

“Please wait until Rias has graduated from high school at least before talking about retirement.”

???? He seemed to be getting excited, but about what?

“Rias, send us a letter during your remaining summer holidays.”

Sirzechs-sama said that while carrying his son Millicas-sama in his arms. Grayfia-san was standing immediately behind them.

“Yes, onii-sama. You stay well as well, Millicas.”

“Yes, Rias-nee-sama!”

We had boarded the train and were giving our last farewells to Sirzechs-sama and the others from the window.

Ah—.

At that moment, I noticed. Sirzechs-sama, Millicas-sama, and also Grayfia-san.

I saw two parents and their child in that three-shot. As I thought, it was like that. It wasn’t a joke—.

Part 2

The return train.

I was being pressed by my untouched school homework.

That's right! I had been busy since coming to the Underworld, but I had completely forgotten about this!

Furthermore, thinking back, didn't I spend off the important summer of my second year of high school on a mountain with a dragon? I wanted to cryyyyyyyyyyyy!

I had used my precious youth on surviving in that mountain! I didn't have any date with Buchou, nor did Akeno-san do any erotic things to me in my room!

I started on my Japanese homework while crying.

But, I did have some amazing experiences during my time in the Underworld. And I had done various studies. We were strong—in terms of power. However, in the case of opposing teams who took greater control than us, no matter how great our power was, we would lose depending on the tactics used.

…If I'm also going to play the games as a [King] in the future, I have to start thinking about tactics and the like right away…

Because, no matter how great my power was from the legendary dragon, if I recklessly plunged forward and fell into my opponent's tricks, it will be an immediate game over! If I was taken out as a [King], my team would have to resign! Though I should have won overall in power, I was defeated by Saji in terms of technique…

Uwaah…I'm so anxious about the future.

I spoke to Buchou who was sitting in the seat in front of me.

"Buchou."

“What is it?”

“I’ve acted reckless until now in order to become a harem king. That is my goal, and my wish to become that hasn’t changed even now. —But, Tannin-ossan told me. That it’s a waste to set that as my final goal. So, I thought about it a little, but I think it’s useless to just aim for an ordinary harem. It’s best if I can make a harem with an attractiveness that won’t lose to anyone and that is strong in the games as well.”

Buchou listened to my words and showed a very surprised expression, but she soon smiled.

“It seems the summer training camp was a success. Meeting other devils in the Underworld seems to have been a big plus for you. We both seem to have learned and advanced forward a lot.”

Yes! I gave it my all!

Suddenly, Koneko-chan appeared there…and sat down on my laaaaaaaap!?

I couldn’t understand what was happening, but—Koneko-chan had sat down on my lap and was twitching her cat ears.

“K-Koneko-chan…?”

I timidly looked at her face, and then,

“Nyan♪”

She smiled with a smile across her whole face. Yeah. With just something like that, my brain flew off.

Asia had teary eyes, Buchou scowled with narrowed eyes, and Akeno-san was giving off pressure with a silent smiling face, but…

Yeah! Cuteness is justice!

Like this, the train headed to the human world we lived in—.

The time in the Underworld has been fun. It was a summer vacation I didn't think I would forget for my entire life.

As the train arrived at the underground platform on the human

world-side, I stretched myself.

“Well, we’ve arrived, we’ve arrived. Now then, let’s return home, Asia—”

When I turned to look at Asia. A mysterious man with delicate features had drawn near Asia.

“Asia Argento…We finally meet.”

“U-Umm…”

Asia was bewildered. This was bad! Was he a pervert! I won’t let you put even a single finger on my Asia-chan!

“Hey, hey, hey! What business do you have with Asia!?”

I came between them! But, the mysterious delicate man questioned Asia with a sincere expression.

“…So you’ve forgotten me. We should have met that time.”

The delicate man—Wait, I’ve seen him somewhere before. The delicate man suddenly revealed his chest and showed a big scar there. It was a deep scar. Asia’s eyes opened wide when she saw that.

“—. That wound, could it be…”

Asia? You remember him?

“Yes, my face couldn’t be seen back then, but I am the devil from that time.”

“__”

Asia became speechless at those words.

“My name is Diodora Astaroth. That time you weren’t able to treat it to the point where a scar wouldn’t remain, but my life was saved due to your Sacred Gear.”

I had heard about Asia’s past. She had been branded as a witch for

saving a devil by chance.

—That's right, he was the devil who had been the trigger for Asia being driven out of the Church.

"Diodora? You're Diodora, aren't you?"

Buchou seemed to recognise him…Ah, I remembered, he was at the meeting between young devils! The handsome high-class devil from that time! I think he was from the family of the current Beelzebub!

Diodora tenderly took Asia's hand and kissed it! Y-You bastard, what do you think you're doing to Asia!?

I was about to leap at him, but without caring about that he spoke to Asia.

"Asia, I came to meet you. I apologise that I couldn't greet you at that meeting. But, I think the encounter between you and I was destiny. —I want you to be my wife. I love you."

—He had proposed to Asia right in front of me.

The hot summer had come to an end, and the autumn that would likely become long would soon begin.

Afterword

If the media expands, I'd to made character songs with the breasts of each heroine singing.

The tsundere that has been long-awaited by the readers has appeared (in Asia's breasts, that is).

It's been a while. Ishibumi here. More naughtiness has been done yet again.

The story has come this far with just breasts as its material. Even I'm surprised.

It's to the extent that Ise has become a protagonist that does a power-up like a Super Sa*yan and Ba*kai by poking breasts. Now that I think about it, Ise snapped when Buchou's breasts were nearly halved, didn't he?

About Pailingual…I was sick when of thought of it.

Volume 5 is the thickest book so far, but the afterword itself is also long so that I can talk about it. There are spoilers mentioned hereafter as well, so please read the rest of this volume first.

- New Characters and the Underworld

Now then, the new characters this time are the monster dragon and the number one of the young devils, but I plan for Tannin and Sairaorg to play an active role from now on, so please look forward to them.

Vali's comrades were revealed one after another as well. Koneko's onee-san "Kuroka", the mysterious holy king sword-user. Are there any others? That is a secret for the future.

The worldview was expanded in the previous volume, but I also had to depict in detail the devil industry in the main story, so this time I described that. From the beginning, I made the Three Great Powers alliance for the sake of the Gremory group versus the Vali Team and for the Rating Games between young devils.

I'll also move forward while focusing on that from now on, and I'd like to talk about things like the worldview and the setting in between breaks.

Because, to the end, the main story is the high-school life and romantic comedy of growing up of Ise and the others.

However, making the worldview of the Underworld was quite a challenge. This work is a present-day fantasy. The present-day Japan is also the stage in this world. Having to make a completely different world from that was extremely difficult.

- Koneko and the club members

The setting of Koneko being a nekomata was discussed between me and Editor-san from the beginning of the series. The chance never quite came around and her true identity remained unknown for over a year, but the ban was removed at last this time.

With this, all the members of the Occult Research Club has had their pasts and identities revealed. Now I feel I just need to show how they grow after that. Everyone has something they carry with them, but I'd like to have they overcome it along with Ise.

When writing about the Occult Research club, I have the habit to make pairs. For example, Rias-buchou and Akeno-san are the "onee-sama duo". These two were often at odds with each other from volume 4, but this is because I'm writing them as the "onee-sama duo" that compete for Ise.

So Xenovia has become a duo with Asia. Their first meeting was the worst, but now they're now friends through and through. I wanted to establish a close friend for Asia and for Xenovia, so I thought of

making these two church-related people a duo.

Koneko-chan's companion is Gasper, aka Gya-kun and Gya-suke. The first-year duo. They're a slanted pair as a sharp-tongued loli and a hikikomori cross-dressing boy, but they're both cute kouhai, so I hope all the readers love them as well.

The last are the boy dup. Ise and Kiba. In the story, Kiba actively teases Ise.

The ace is Kiba no matter how you look at it. Up until volume 5, the ratio of enemies he's defeated is in the top class among the club members. Ise is the main character, so he'll absolutely become strong in the future. I also want Kiba to become similarly strong as a partner who protects his back. Inside me, I want to make him play as an active role as a rear main character, following Ise and Rias. In any case, he's easy to write about in battle.

Last is Azazel-sensei. He suddenly showed ways of fighting that no one thought of to the club members, and displayed himself as a deplorable teacher. This time he didn't fight directly, but even so if the number of readers who like sensei increase, I'll be happy.

Now, there are many worries about what will become of the remaining [Rook] piece, but that's something to look forward to in the future. I think it will come out within the next year.

Here is a single point about the front cover of volume 5. When you take the wrapper off and look at the front cover, Koneko-chan's ** is…

- Rating Game

Volume 5's story focused on Koneko and Saji. I was especially happy about writing the story this time because I'm been planning this battle since I first created Saji. Since I wanted for Ise to be defeated at least once and I thought that Saji was the only one for that role.

I wanted to give Ise an ordeal in the volume he attained Balance

Breaker. I'm a severe author, aren't I?

There are a lot of prodigy characters in this series, but even so I was thinking that I'd like to also bring out effort-type characters. Ise and Saji are effort-types. I didn't want to write like you can't succeed if you're talentless. Because I have usually found that hard work pays out. This is the back theme this time.

I originally like thinking about the battlefields and tactics in Rating Game battles, but because this work is a romantic comedy, I thought that they shouldn't just suddenly start playing the games, so I started by reinforcing the characters and worldview first. There are still more game battles to come in the future.

Speaking of which, did you notice? The members that retired and the members that remained are reversed from the Phoenix battle.

- Advertisement

It's late, but here's an advertisement. Short stories have started from this year's Dragon Magazine November issue!

Before that, all the female club members also appeared on a ecchi swimsuit poster (Buchou's is a string swimsuit) + a short story in the September issue, but the announcement was slow. I'm truly sorry.

To the readers who have only purchased the volumes, you may be unfamiliar with the short stories, but it's mainly making the characters dash around in jokes and ero-moments.

The sale of the short stories' collection is still uncertain, so please read what you want.

- To all the readers

Thank you very much for all your support! Thanks to you, this series has been doing well. It seems it will continue for a long time,

so please continue to take care of me. I'd like to reach ten volumes by all means.

I've also received fan letters! Since volume 4, there have been a lot of comments about Akeno-san. Did everyone fall for Akeno-san in volume 4, I wonder? I also enjoy writing Akeno-san since volume 4. Pay attention to the ero-ero onee-sama duo from now on. Of course, Asia and Koneko-chan will also play an active part.

- About me

Thanks to this, I run to work every day. My lower back, which I fractured from weariness back in early spring, is still in rehabilitation, but it's mostly fine now. Health is number one. I've also started drinking aojiru. (Note: Vegetable juice made from green leafy vegetables.)

- Thanks and about the next volume

I give thanks to Miyama Zero-sama and editor H-sama, for finally being able to surpass five volumes.

Every time I oppai-oppai-talk to Editor-san, it's "breasts this" and "breasts that". When we went to a Yakiniku restaurant together, we also oppai-oppai-quarrelled.

I amended and corrected in Akeno-san's finger-sucking scene in volume 3, and the truth is I corrected Akeno-san's scene in volume 4 as well. I remembered how to use Akeno-san in volume 5, so there were no corrections this time.

This time I also wanted to do a "Ise powers up by sucking Buchou's breasts!", but since I couldn't take out anything further from the fantasia collection, it was poking instead.

But, it was Editor-san who said the absurdity first, requesting "Please put ero-material in the battle scenes" in volume 2. Thinking that "It's fine as it is, though", I wrote and sent in the stupid

development where girls' clothes are sent flying. Thinking that they'd definitely refuse it, I was told "The best! This is it, this!" and given an instant OK. That is the secret story of the creation of Dress Break. I'm glad that Dress Break was born. The support of it from the readers is also high. Consequently, the author and editor were both ero-ero too.

However, I've finally gotten to the point of talking about breasts, but…What will become of this work?

And Miyama Zero-sama. I sincerely apologise for always bringing out absurd settings and characters. But, I'm already filled with emotion from your wonderful illustrations in each volume. The perfection of your colour monochrome pictures is so high they make me tremble and shout "Amazing, amazing!" every time. All you readers, really, please read the short stories as well. Just looking at Miyama-san's illustrations in the short stories make them plenty enjoyable. With one of Buchou as a little girl and of an attractive yuki-onna, you won't get tired of looking at it.

The front-piece illustration of Ise's armour and Vali's armour in volume 4 was really exciting. I was glad that transformation scene had been made, and I unconsciously gave a guts pose when I saw it.

It's obvious, but I always and strongly believe that High School DxD has managed to get this far with not just my power, but also thanks to the assistance I've had from Miyama-san and Editor-san from the beginning.

When I think about it, I've managed to came so far, but it seems it will still continue for quite some time, so please continue your support!

The next volume is about Asia. It ended with an incredible pull in volume 5, but it will become serious in volume 6. The volume of the second school term may become longer than the volume of the first term, but please continue your support!

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ The size of Japanese rooms are often measured by the number of tatami floor mats they can fit inside.
2. ↑ Tsukkomi basically means a retort, the kind used by the straight man in a comedy act. Left in the original Japanese to keep close to the original meaning.
3. ↑ The "he" character looks like this へ, which on a face is like a pout with the lips turned upwards.
4. ↑ Honshu is the largest island among the islands of Japan.
5. ↑ Note that that the hesitation in the last sentence is because he switches from the rougher "I" (おれ) to the politer "I" (ぼく).
6. ↑ Once again, switching from rough "I" to polite "I".
7. ↑ Urashima Taro is a character from an ancient Japanese tale, who after spending three days in a castle under the sea returned to find 300 hundred years had passed in the real world.
8. ↑ Galge are visual novel games that focus on the game character developing romantic relationships with various girls, particularly in a sexual and erotic way.
9. ↑ Note: The kanji used by Ise here is different than the one used by Rias's father; while both words are pronounced as とう, the first means "father-in-law", while the one used by Ise just means "father".
10. ↑ This is a nickname for Gasper, which combines the first part of his name ギャー with the kanji 助, which comes out as "suke". The kanji basically means "help" or "assistance", but I do not know how significant this is.
11. ↑ Casual word for "old man" whose usually in their middle age.
12. ↑ Essentially a Japanese version of the kind of animalistic cries used by Tarzan.
13. ↑ The "flag" is a term from visual novels where the player encounters an event that improves their relationship with the

girls in the game. Also note that Ise is referring to the "girls" in his delusions here.

14. ↑ Translated literally as the "Black Magic" or "Sorcery" in English, youjutsu is a kind of magic that is almost exclusive to youkai.
15. ↑ Senjutsu, translated literally as "Wizardry" or "Secret of Immortality", is another form of magic more closely related to the body. Sennin, translated literally as "Immortal Mountain Wizard", are sages that are capable of using senjutsu, and thereby immensely increase their lifespan.
16. ↑ Youkai is a general term for "demons" in Japanese. There are various kinds and species.
17. ↑ Nekomata: Mythical Two-tailed Cat Demon. A species of youkai.
18. ↑ A rare sub-species of Nekomata. Kanji used is rare and outdated, so literal translation is difficult.
19. ↑ "Danna", in this case, means "master", as in the person with the highest authority of the family. In this case, it is reffering to Ravel's father. Lord Phoenix.
20. ↑ "Nya" and "nyan" are the Japanese equivalent of "meow", which Kuroka often adds to the end of her sentences.
21. ↑ Golden cloud that Sun Goku can ride and fly on in "Journey to the West". In the Dragon Ball manga and anime, the concept of this golden cloud is reused, called the "Nimbus cloud" in English dub.
22. ↑ Staff that belonged to Son Goku, which has the power to grow and extend according to this will. Also appeared in Dragon Ball.
23. ↑ This refers to Son Goku's companions, Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing, in the the story Journey to the West.
24. ↑ Alternate Japanese names for Zhu Bajie and Sha Wujing.
25. ↑ Fuku-buchou: Club vice-president, referring to Akeno-san.
26. ↑ By written, it means the kanji used are 冥界猫, which means "underworld cat", while it is read as the English phrase ヘル キャット (hell cat).
27. ↑ A naginata is traditional Japanese blade in the form of a pole with curved blade at the end.
28. ↑ The kanji given here read it as "Mirror of Recollection". Presumably, the English name is a reference to Alice from "Through the Looking Glass" by Lewis Carroll.

29. ↑ The actual term used here is "こもった一撃", which basically means "blow heavy/filled with (something)". Since this is really awkward phrasing, I simply put the more easily understood "heavy blow" instead.
30. ↑ The kanji used along with this English name are "乳語翻訳", which translates as "Breast-Language Translation".
31. ↑ Although I think most people already know the term, "tsundere" is basically the combination of the words "sharp/scathing" and "loving", in other words someone who is mean and cold on the surface but shows their true love-struck feelings at times.
32. ↑ Indra, whose name is Japanese is "Taijakuten" (帝釈天), is the leader of the gods or "Devas" in Hindu mythology. He also appears in Buddhism as the god "Śakra".
33. ↑ Mt. Sumeru is the name of the "central world-mountain" that appears in Buddhist mythology. It also appears in Hinduism, under the shortened name of "Mt. Meru".